MARVEL
SPECIAL SUMMER FUN ISSUE!
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30 SEPT
BEGINNING THIS ISSUE: THE MUTANT REPORT!
MARVEL AGE
PICK
EUBANKS

Stan Lee presents

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EDITORIAL

"Summer Fun" by **Jim Salicrup**

Whether you've been working hard at your job or at school, summer is finally here and the fun has just begun! That means Marvel's batch of double-sized annuals are heading your way this summer to guarantee your trip to the Riviera or Acapulco won't bog down for a second! If you were at all worried that Marvel's regular dose of monthly comic book madness wouldn't be enough to fill all of your summer leisure hours, just check out our preview of this year's extravaganzas on page **18**!

Like New York City's illustrious Mayor **Ed Koch**, we'd like to know how we're doing, so we're providing you with a report card to grade our '85 Annuals. Just clip it out and send it to us at the end of summer. We'll average out the results and print our final grades here in **MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE** #39.

1985 MARVEL AGE® SUMMER ANNUALS *REPORT CARD*

		OUTSTANDING	GOOD	FAIR	POOR	AWFUL
WEB OF SPIDER-MAN #1	STORY					
	ART					
	OVERALL					
SPECTACULAR SPIDER-MAN #5	STORY					
	ART					
	OVERALL					
AVENGERS #14	STORY					
	ART					
	OVERALL					
FANTASTIC FOUR #19	STORY					
	ART					
	OVERALL					
AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #19	STORY					
	ART					
	OVERALL					
HULK #14	STORY					
	ART					
	OVERALL					
ROM #4	STORY					
	ART					
	OVERALL					
THOR #13	STORY					
	ART					
	OVERALL					
NEW MUTANTS SPECIAL #1	STORY					
	ART					
	OVERALL					
X-MEN #9	STORY					
	ART					
	OVERALL					
CONAN #10	STORY					
	ART					
	OVERALL					

GRADED BY NAME _____ AGE _____
ADDRESS

Next month, I promise to tell you all about the 1985 **MARVEL AGE ANNUAL**!

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MARVEL COMING ATTRACTIONS

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Here is a complete checklist of what's happening in all the Marvel, Epic and Star titles bearing a October cover date.

A Limited Series is a title which will only run for a specific number of issues.
A Graphic Novel is a trade paperback-sized edition.
A Direct Sales title is available only at selected outlets.
Shipping Date refers to the date the comics leave the printer.

A new **Vision and Scarlet Witch** Limited Series! **THE NEW MUTANTS** has a new artist! **Barry Windsor-Smith** returns to **THE X-MEN**! You read it here first, but unless you act now, you could still miss the excitement! Don't delay, tell your favorite comics shop owner which titles to reserve for you today!

Titles shipping **June 4**, on sale **June 25**.

THE THING #28 — The Thing in the wrestling ring? Well, even a super hero has to earn a living. And they're lining up from here to the bleachers to face off against him! This one is guaranteed to tear apart the turnbuckles! "In This Corner" is written by **Mike Carlin**, penciled by **Ron Wilson** and inked by **Brett Breeding**. 65¢.

DAREDEVIL #223 — The Beyonder has the power! **Daredevil** has the desire! Now — at last — **Hornhead's** fondest hope is about to come true! A stunning tie-in with **SECRET WARS II #3** written by **Denny O'Neil**, penciled by **Dave Mazzucchelli** and inked by **Kim DeMulder**. 65¢.

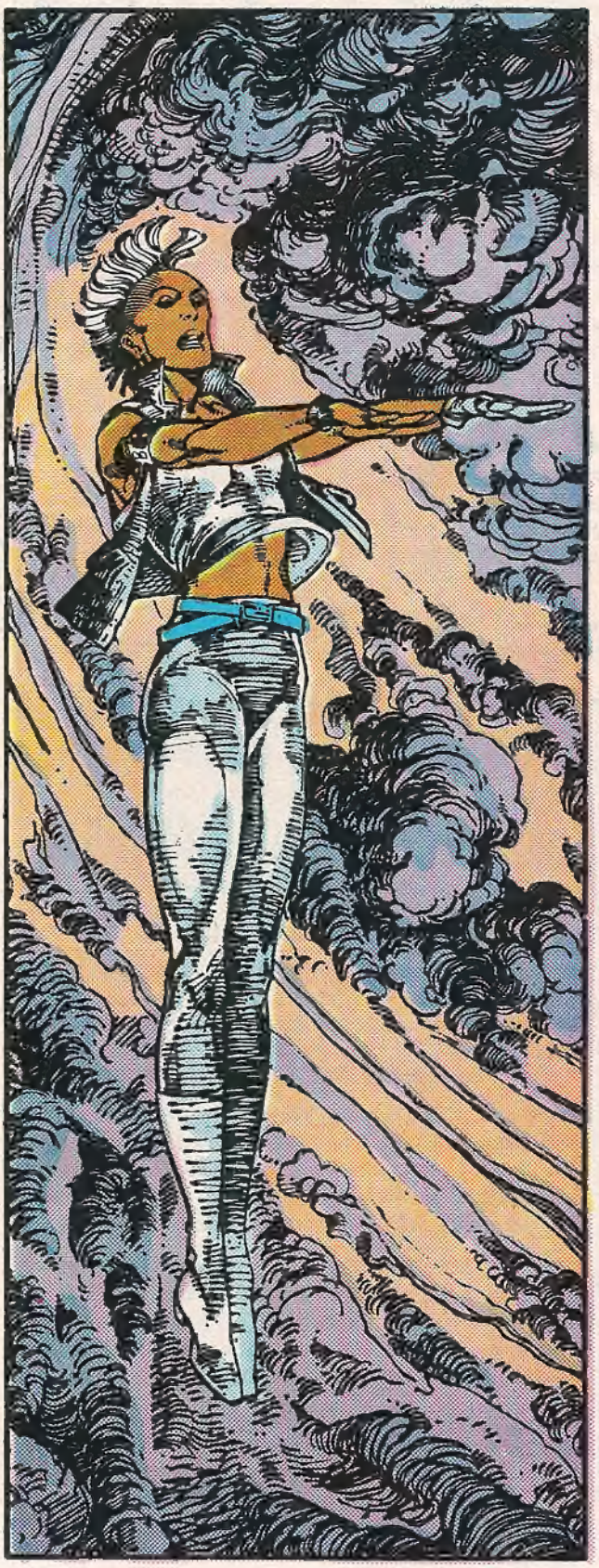
NEW MUTANTS #32 — Steve Leialoha debuts as the *new* **New Mutants** artist in a wild tale that travels the timestreams! The city is Cairo! Menace is all around! But the real threat is **Karma** and **the New Mutants'** own possible future — one in which they exist as brutal killers! "To the Ends of the Earth" is written by **Chris Claremont** with art by **Steve Leialoha**. 65¢.

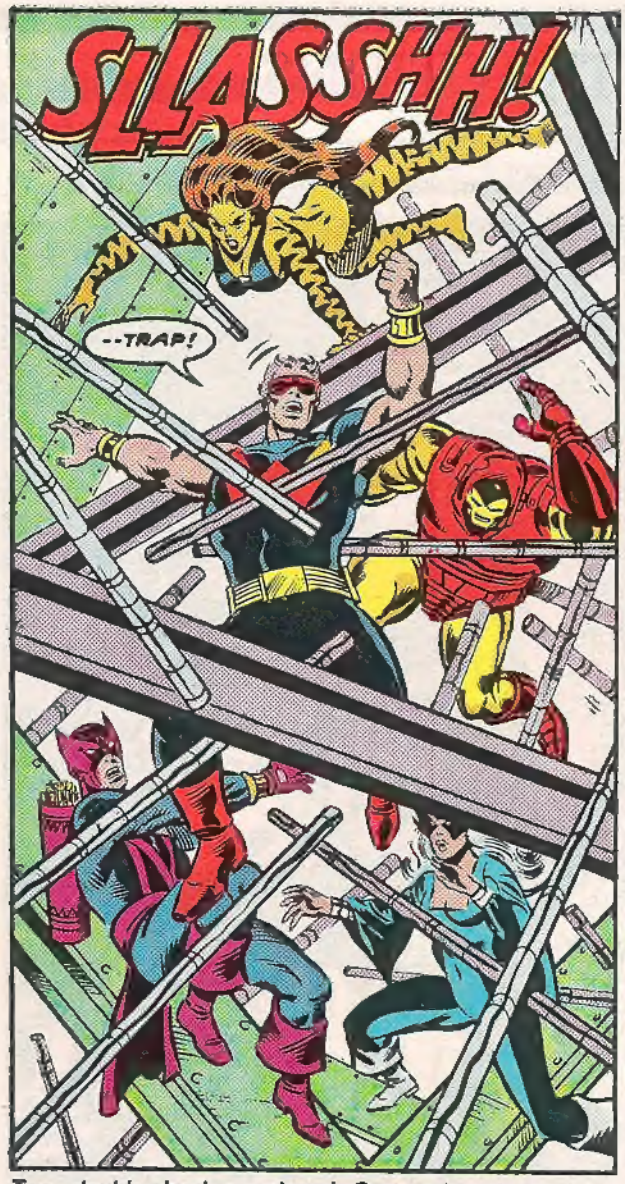
THE WEB OF SPIDER-MAN #7 — What do **Spider-Man**, a sanitarium, and fugitive Nazi war criminals have in common? Eighty-year-old adventurer **Dominic Fortune**! Is **Dominic** senile, as his son believes? **Spidey** must find out the answer in "There, but for Fortune!" written by **Danny Fingeroth** with art by **Jim Mooney**. Featuring a special **Dominic Fortune** flashback sequence by **Walt Simonson** and **Terry Austin**. 65¢.

PLANET TERRY #7 — Introducing detective **Sam Space**. He can find anything or anyone — or so he claims. **Terry** asks **Sam** to help find his parents. But what **Sam** gives **Terry** and **Robots** is a big case of double-trouble! "The Casebook of Sam Space" is written by **Stan Kay**, penciled by **Warren Kremer** and inked by **Jon D'Agostino**. A Star comic. 65¢.

FRAGGLE ROCK #4 — One of the **Doozers** wants to become a **Fraggle**! It's a story that will drive you bonkers! "The Dizziest Doozer in the World!" is written by **Stan Kay**, with art by **Merle Severin**. A Star comic. 65¢.

STRAWBERRY SHORTCAKE #4 — Strawberry Shortcake and all her friends have a new look — and a new friend! Meet the "berry" magical **Berry Princess**! "The New Strawberry Shortcake" is written by **Stan Kay**, penciled by **Howie Post** and inked by **Roberta Edelman**. A Star comic. 65¢.





Two double-sized premieres! One colossal story! It starts with ***WEST COAST AVENGERS #1 . . .***

DREADSTAR AND COMPANY #4 — An alliance against **the Instrumentality** is formed! A spy is discovered! Also introducing — the mysterious **Z**, in "The Hand of Darkness!", by **Jim Starlin**, the Epic reprint of the modern-day classic from **DREADSTAR** #4. An Epic comic. Mando paper. **75¢.**

RAWHIDE KID (Limited Series) #3 — **The Rawhide Kid** discovers the true price of freedom when he confronts a black bounty hunter who must bring **Rawhide** in — dead or alive! "Slave" is written by **Bill Mantlo**, penciled by **Herb Trimpe** and inked by **Gerry Talaoc**. Mando paper. 75¢.

THE SQUADRON SUPREME (Limited Series) #2 — The fate of the world is irrevocably altered when **Tom Thumb** makes what he believes is "A Small Sacrifice!" Written by **Mark Gruenwald**, penciled by **Bob Hall** and inked by **John Beatty**. Mando paper. 75¢.

THE SECTAURS #3 — To save the Shining Realm, **Dargon** and his friends must find the secrets locked in the fabled Hyves. But they have not reckoned with the perils of the Deadly Swamp and the treacherous traps of **Skite**! Written by **Bill Mantlo**, penciled by **Steve Geiger** and inked by **Joe DeBeato**. Mando paper. 75¢.

THE WEST COAST AVENGERS #1 — Because you demanded it — **the West Coast Avengers** in their own monthly series! **Ultron-12** wants **Wonder Man**! The fight **the West Coast Avengers** put up to stop him is so titanic, it took **Steve, Al** and **Joe** 48 pages and a cross-over to **THE VISION AND THE SCARLET WITCH** #1 to tell it! Plus: The return of **Henry Pym**! "Teammates" is written by **Steve Englehart**, penciled by **Al Milgrom** and inked by **Joe Sinnott**. $1.25.

STARSTRUCK #4 — In the eyes of the law, **Brucilla** and **Galatia 9** are outlaws. **Brucilla** wants to know why! What **Brucilla** wants — she gets! "Alias" is written by **Elaine Lee** and drawn by **Mike Kaluta**. An Epic comic. Direct sales only. Baxter paper. **For Mature Readers.** $1.50.

THE LIFE OF CAPTAIN MARVEL (Limited Series) #3 — **The Controller** gets trashed! **Captain Marvel** gets cosmic awareness! **Thanos** gets set to use the Cosmic Cube! And you get to enjoy it, the deluxe edition reprint of **CAPTAIN MARVEL** #'s 26, 29 and 30, plotted by **Jim Starlin**, written by **Starlin** and **Mike Friedrich**, penciled by **Starlin** and inked by **Dan Green** and **Al Milgrom**. Baxter paper. Direct sales only. $2.00.

Titles shipping **June 11**, on sale **July 2**.

THE AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #269 — You know **Firelord**! You've seen what he can do! Now his sights are on **Spider-Man**! The result — "Burn, Spider, Burn!" is written by **Tom DeFalco**, penciled by **Ron Frenz** and inked by **Joe Rubinstein**. 65¢.

CAPTAIN AMERICA #310 — The super-powered **Serpent Society** is out for blood! Too late, **Captain America** discovers that the real snake in the grass is not them, but **the Constrictor**! Guest starring **Starfox** and **the Black Knight**. "Serpents of the World Unite!" is written by **Mark Gruenwald**, penciled by **Paul Neary** and inked by **Dennis Janke**. 65¢.

POWER PACK #15 — **Carmody** returns, with a new batch of tricks to snare the **Power** kids! As if that wasn't enough trouble for our young heroes, **Volstagg** of Asgard's **Warriors Three** has pledged to tell the kids' parents about their powers! "Reckoning" *also* guest-stars **Beta Ray Bill**! Written by **Louise Simonson**, penciled by **June Brigman** and inked by **Bob Wiacek**. 65¢.

MICRONAUTS #13 — Their numbers are legion. Their power is incalculable! They are the dread **Dark Armada** and their deadly sights are set on their next victim — **the Micronauts**! "Dark Armada!" is written by **Peter B. Gillis**, penciled by **Kelly Jones** and inked by **Danny Bulanadi**. 65¢.

ALPHA FLIGHT #27 — What's wrong with **Guardian**? **Heather** finds out — and all of what she discovers threatens to destroy **Alpha Flight**! Plus: a special appearance by one of the biggest names in the Marvel Universe! "Betrayal" is written and drawn by **John Byrne**. 65¢.

WALLY THE WIZARD #7 — Joust a minute! Jousts are supposed to be fun, aren't they? Then why is **Wally** about to be skewered and served up as wizard apprentice shish-kebab? The answer lies in "The Joust of the Century!" written by **Ben Brown**, penciled by **Howie Post** and inked by **Jon D'Agostino**. A Star comic. 65¢.

TOP DOG #4 — What does our government want with **Top Dog**? **Top Dog** knows and he doesn't like it! "The Secret of Top Dog" is written by **Lennie Herman**, penciled by **Warren Kremer** and inked by **Jacqueline Roettcher**. A Star comic. 65¢.

HEATHCLIFF #4 — **Heathcliff** joins the circus. Will the big top ever recover? "A Day at the Circus" is written by **Angelo De Cesare**, penciled by **Warren Kremer** and inked by **Jacqueline Roettcher**. A Star comic. 65¢.

DOCTOR STRANGE #73 — **Clea** has been captured! The rebellion is in ruins! The unstoppable **Mindless Ones** are on a rampage! Is surrender the only way for **Doctor Strange** to stop the destruction? "The Final Triumph!" is written by **Roger Stern**, laid out by **Paul Smith** and finished by **Terry Austin**. 65¢.

GROO THE WANDERER #8 — With friends like **Taranto**, Groo doesn't need enemies. **Taranto** has double-crossed **Groo** twenty times! If you think **Groo** won't fall for the twenty-*first* time, then you haven't been reading **GROO**. "The Treasure of Kantor" is by the incredible **Sergio Aragonés** along with the inconsequential **Mark Evanier**. An Epic comic. Mando paper. 75¢.

THE FANTASTIC FOUR INDEX #1 — It just had to be done! The companion index to the best-selling **SPIDER-MAN INDEX** is here! Covers, plots, heroes, villains, credits and more! Everything you wanted to know about **THE FANTASTIC FOUR** #'s 1-20 compiled by Marvel's own Answer Man, **George Olshevsky**. Cover by **John Byrne**. $1.25.

LONGSHOT (Limited Series) #2 — **Longshot** takes a job as a movie stuntman. When the shooting starts, it's lights, camera — *murder!* Introducing **Ricochet Rita**! "I'll Wave To You From The Top!" is written by **Ann Nocenti** with art by **Art Adams**. Mando paper. 75¢.

THE VISION AND THE SCARLET WITCH (Limited Series) #1 — He is a synthetic human, she a mutant. Their love has survived many tests — but now it faces the ultimate challenge, from **Nekra, the Black Talon, the Grim Reaper** and our own government! It's a 48-page shocker that contains so much, it crosses-over with **THE WEST COAST AVENGERS!** Written by **Steve Englehart**, penciled by **Richard Howell** and inked by **Andy Mushynsky**. $1.25.

THE SPECTACULAR SPIDER-MAN ANNUAL #5 — A gangwar is imminent! The streets will be bathed in the blood of teenagers! **Spidey** tracks down the one man who can stop it — but his quarry *refuses* to take a hand! **Spidey** must find out the soul-searing reason why in "Ace!" Written by **Peter David** and debuting the dynamic penciling of **Mark Beachum** with inking by **Joe Rubinstein**. $1.25.

SAVAGE SWORD OF CONAN #116 — Being a royal bodyguard can't be all bad, right? Wrong! When **Conan's enemies, the Brotherhood of the Falcon,** induct the king he guards into their ranks, **Conan** confronts trouble — big trouble! "Lords of the Falcon" is written by **Larry Yakata** with art by **Ernie Chan**. A Marvel magazine. $1.50.

THE BLACK DRAGON (Limited Series) #4 — *War!* The forces of light versus the dark evil of shadow. **Brian**

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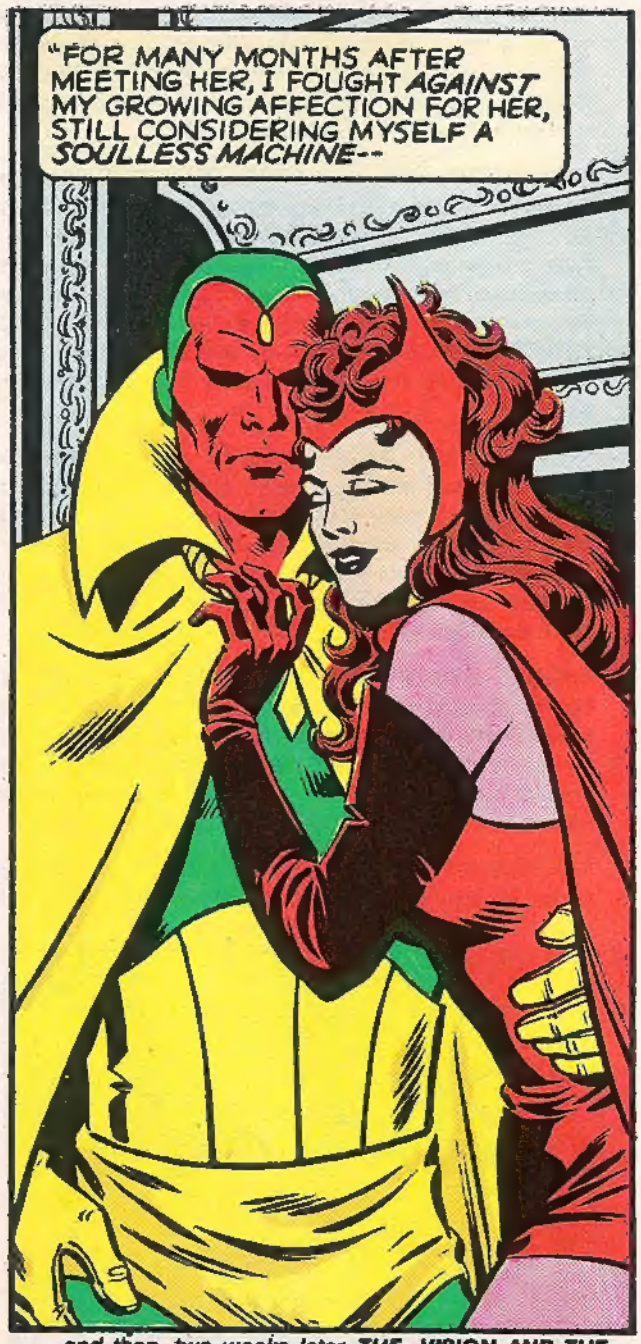
"FOR MANY MONTHS AFTER MEETING HER, I FOUGHT AGAINST MY GROWING AFFECTION FOR HER, STILL CONSIDERING MYSELF A SOULLESS MACHINE--

. . . and then, two weeks later, ***THE VISION AND THE SCARLET WITCH*** *#1! Don't miss either of them!*

Griffon gathers **Robin Hood** and his men as well as the folk of Faery to oppose the demon legions of **Edmund De Valere** . . . only to learn that both the **Lady Elliane** and **James Dunreith**, the Realm's one hope against **De Valere's** sorcery, have been made *part* of those demon hordes. Written by **Chris Claremont** with art by **John Bolton**. An Epic comic. Baxter paper. Direct sales only. **For Mature Readers.** $1.50.

THE SISTERHOOD OF STEEL #5 — Once a **Sister** — always a **Sister!** To reject that code and desert the **Sisterhood** means death — especially when that deserter is **Boronwë's** best friend, **Kelkil!** "Passion, Pain and Politics" is written by **Christy Marx** and drawn by **Mike Vosburg**. An Epic Comic. Baxter paper. Direct sales only. **For Mature Readers.** $1.50.

Titles shipping **June 18**, on sale **July 9**.

MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE #31 — Cover by **Cockrum!** News on the **NIGHTCRAWLER Limited Series!** A Hulking interview with **John Byrne! Bill Mantlo** on **Alpha Flight! IRON MAN** #200 — the surprising scoop! A stunning preview of the all new, all savage **SAVAGE TALES #1!** Plus all your favorite features. Direct sales only. 35¢.

THE INCREDIBLE HULK #312 — Who is **Bruce Banner** and why did he become the world-famous scientist he is? Don't miss the surprising answer in this tie-in with **SECRET WARS II!** "Through The Past Darkly" is written by **Bill Mantlo**, laid out by **Mike Mignola** and finished by **Gerry Talaoc**. 65¢.

THE AVENGERS #260 — **The Skrulls** and the **Avengers** fighting *together?* Only the terrifying secret of Sanctuary II could cause it! The fate of the **Skrull** and Earth solar systems hang in the balance in "Assault on Sanctuary" written by **Roger Stern**, penciled by **John Buscema** and inked by **Tom Palmer**. 65¢.

CONAN #175 — No mortal in his right mind messes with **Conan**. But the **Spectre of Death** is another matter! **Conan** confronts his ultimate foe in "The Scarlet Personage" written by **Jim Owsley**, penciled by **John Buscema** and inked by **Ernie Chan**. 65¢.

MARVEL TALES #180 — The rampaging **Rhino** is out for revenge in this classic reprinted from **THE AMAZING SPIDER-MAN** #41. "The Horns of the Rhino" is written by **Stan Lee**, penciled by **John Romita** and inked by **Mike Esposito**. 65¢.

X-MEN #198 — **Barry Windsor-Smith** returns in this special saga of **Ororo!** If there's no tear in your eye at this tale's end, you have no heart! "Lifedeath II (Heart of Darkness)" is written by **Chris Claremont** with art by **Barry Windsor-Smith**. 65¢.

ROM #71 — **Rom** and his spaceknights are betrayed by one of their own kind! And not even death can wipe away the "Shame." Written by **Bill Mantlo**, penciled by **Steve Ditko** and inked by **P. Craig Russell**. 65¢.

MOON KNIGHT #5 — Is **Moon Knight** a super hero, or merely an ultra-powerful puppet? **Lieutenant Flint** knows — because he's the one about to pull the strings! Written by **Alan Zelenetz** with art by **Chris Warner** and **E.R. Cruz**. 65¢.

G.I. JOE #40 — **The G.I. Joes** have a new air/sea base. And **Cobra** is about to blow it out of the water! The anti-terrorist action starts on the first page of "Hydrofoil," written by **Larry Hama**, penciled by **Rod Whigham** and inked by **Andy Mushynsky**. Mando paper. 75¢.

ETERNALS #1 — When a **Deviant** knocks on your door — don't answer! Call **the Eternals!** The epic struggle between good and ultimate evil that began in the Seventies returns in this double-sized debut saga, "A Mirror for Mortality," written by **Peter B. Gillis**, penciled by **Sal Buscema** and inked by **Al Gordon**. $1.25.

DREADSTAR #20 — Life is cheap — except when it's yours! To escape the **Lord Papal's** trap, someone must die! The only question is, who? "The Fallen Hero" is written

and drawn by **Jim Starlin** and inked by **Sam De La Rosa**. An Epic comic. Baxter paper. Direct sales only. $1.50.

Title shipping **June 24**, on sale **July 15**.

MARVEL GRAPHIC NOVEL #17: REVENGE OF THE LIVING MONOLITH — He's fought **the X-Men, Spider-Man** and **Thor** — and he's here in New York for one thing: *REVENGE!* For more on this chilling Graphic Novel, check out page 28! Written by **David Michelinie**, penciled by **Marc Silvestri** and inked by **Geof Isherwood**. Danner paper. $6.95.

Titles shipping **June 25**, on sale **July 16**.

THE FANTASTIC FOUR #283 — **The FF** at the mercy of **the Psycho Man** in his home — the dread Microverse! It's a titantic tale of terror that once again shows why you made this "the world's greatest comic magazine!" Written and penciled by **John Byrne** and inked by **Jerry Ordway**. 65¢.

IRON MAN #199 — **Iron Man** crisacrosses the country in a desperate attempt to learn why **Tony Stark's** oldest and dearest friends are vanishing — and finds sudden, terrible tragedy. Is this **Obadiah Stane's** final triumph? A gut-wrenching thriller written by **Denny O'Neil**, penciled and inked by **Ian Akin** and **Brian Garvey**. 65¢.

PETER PARKER, THE SPECTACULAR SPIDER-MAN #107 — The chiller of the year! **Spider-Man** faces the sanity-destroying menace of his own dreams! Featuring **the Hulk** and **Nightmare** himself! "Welcome to My Nightmare" is written by **Peter David**, penciled by **Sal Buscema** and inked by **Brett Breeding**. 65¢.

THOR #360 — To free the victims of **Malekith, Thor** must go to Hel! But does **Balder** dare lead him? Written and drawn by **Walt Simonson**. 65¢.

THE NEW DEFENDERS #148 — **The New Defenders** encounter mystery, murder and supernatural menace when they embark on the search for the fabled artifact of power — **the Grey God**! Guest-starring **Daimon** and **Patsy Hellstrom, Cutlass** and **Typhoon**! "The Kickshaws Consignment" is written by **Peter B. Gillis**, laid out by guest artist **Sal Buscema** and finished by **Art Nichols**. 65¢.

ELFQUEST #3 — Meeting another tribe of elves for the first time, **Cutter** and **the Wolfriders** capture their healer **Leetah**, and so make an implacable enemy! "The Raid at Sorrow's End" is written by **Wendy** and **Richard Pini** and drawn by **Wendy Pini**. An Epic comic. Mando paper. 75¢.

SECRET WARS II (Limited Series) #4 — He loves **Dazzler**, wants to cure **Rick Jones** of cancer, and this is just the beginning! Has **the Beyonder** become the ultimate philanthropist — or something far, far worse? "The Miracle Worker" begins developments that will play major roles in **THOR #363** and **POWER PACK #18**! Written by **Jim Shooter**, penciled by **Al Milgrom** and inked by **Steve Leialoha**. Mando paper. 75¢.

TRANSFORMERS #9 — Introducing **Circuit-Breaker**! She *hates* **Transformers** — and doesn't care whether they're good or bad! She just wants to kill them all! Written by **Bob Budiansky**, penciled by **Mike Maneely** and inked by **Brad Joyce**. Mando paper. 75¢.

STAR WARS #100 — **The Nagai** invade **the Alliance** HQ on Endor! A computer has grounded the best **Alliance** pilots — **Han** and **Luke** — and **Princess Leia** must face the brunt of the attack alone! "First Strike!" is a double-sized anniversary spectacular, written by **Jo Duffy** and penciled by **Cynthia Martin**. $1.25.

SPIDER-MAN INDEX #7 — Everything you've ever wanted to know about everyone's friendly neighborhood **Spider-Man** and more! The complete listing of characters, credits, synopses, color cover reproductions and more from **THE AMAZING SPIDER-MAN** #'s 156-186, and Annuals #10 & 11! Compiled by **George Olshevsky**. Mando paper. $1.25.

DOCTOR WHO #13 — Continuing the adventures of the universe's most eccentric time traveler! "Junkyard Demon" pits **the Doctor** against his old foes, **the Cybermen**, courtesy of writer **Steve Parkhouse** and artists **Mike McMahon** and **Adolpho Buylla**. Plus: The "Who Knows" column, the "**Doctor Who Bookshelf**" and a complete-in-one-story backup, "Yonder . . . the Yeti," by **Steve Parkhouse** and **David Lloyd**. New cover by **Dave Gibbons**. Direct sales only. Baxter paper. $1.50.

ALIEN LEGION #9 — When it comes to hatred, no one hates better than a **Harkilon**. Where does that leave the squad of **Legionnaires** trapped on a remote world with an *army* of **Harkilons**? In one huge heap of trouble! Written by **Alan Zelenetz**, penciled by **Chris Warner** and debuting the inking of **Randy Emberlin**. An Epic comic. Baxter paper. Direct Sales only. $1.50.

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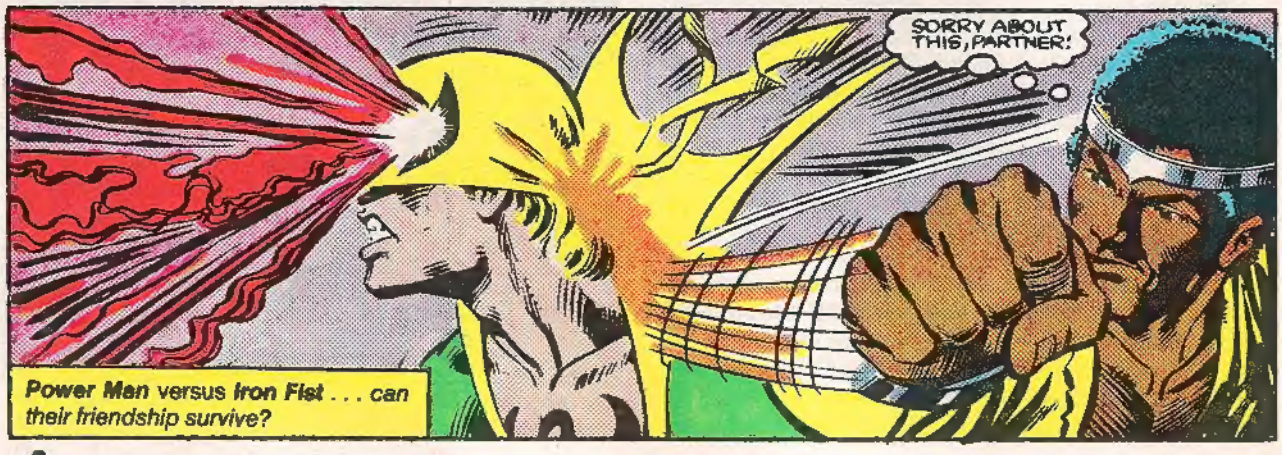
Cutter meets Leetah . . . and ELFQUEST shifts into high gear!

MORE COMING ATTRACTIONS

Titles shipping in **July.**

THE THING #29 — "Gator" by **Carlin, Wilson** and **Ryan.**
DAREDEVIL #224 — "Abe" by **Owsley, Jurgens** and **Isherwood.**
THE NEW MUTANTS #33 — by **Claremont** and **Leialcha.**
WEB OF SPIDER-MAN #8 — by **Fingeroth** and **McLeod.**
WEST COAST AVENGERS #2 — "Sons" by **Englehart, Milgrom** and **Sinnott.**
PLANET TERRY #8 — "Alphatraz" by **Manak, Kremer** and **D'Agostino.**
PETER PORKER, THE SPECTACULAR SPIDER-HAM #4
CLOAK AND DAGGER #3
RED SONJA #11 — by **L. Simonson, Wilshire** and **Nichols.**
DREADSTAR AND COMPANY #5 — by **Starlin.**
RAWHIDE KID #4 — by **Mantlo, Trimpe** and **Talaoc.**
SQUADRON SUPREME #3 — by **Gruenwald, Hall** and **Beatty.**
CONAN THE KING #31 — "Force of Arms" by **Kraar, Docherty** and **Isherwood.**
MOONSHADOW #4 — by **DeMatteis** and **Muth.**
SWORDS OF THE SWASHBUCKLERS #3 — by **Mantlo** and **Guice.**
LIFE OF CAPTAIN MARVEL #4 — by **Starlin, Wein, Sinnott** and **Milgrom.**
AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #270 — "The Flame and the Fury" by **DeFalco, Frenz** and **Rubenstein.**
CAPTAIN AMERICA #311 — "Jobe" by **Gruenwald, Neary** and **Janke.**
POWER PACK #16 — "The Kid Who Fell to Earth" by **L. Simonson, Brigman** and **Wiacek.**
MICRONAUTS #14 — by **Gillis, Jones** and **Bulanadi.**
ALPHA FLIGHT #28 — by **Byrne.**
WALLY THE WIZARD #8 — "Time After Time" by **Bolling.**
THE FURTHER ADVENTURES OF INDIANA JONES #32 — by **Grant, Ditko** and **Patterson.**
DAZZLER #40 — by **Goodwin, Chadwick** and **Guice.**
EWOKS #4 — "Valley of Evil" by **Manak, Kremer** and **D'Agostino.**
GROO THE WANDERER #9 — by **Aragonès** with **Evanier.**
LONGSHOT #3 — by **Nocenti** and **Adams.**
THE VISION AND THE SCARLET WITCH #2 — by **Englehart, Howell** and **Mushynsky.**
THE FANTASTIC FOUR INDEX #2 — compiled by **Olshevsky.**
THE AVENGERS ANNUAL #14 — by **Stern** and **Byrne.**
THE FANTASTIC FOUR ANNUAL #19 — by **Byrne** and **Sinnott.**
THE SAVAGE SWORD OF CONAN #117 — "The Winds of Aka-Gaar" by **Yakata** and **Kwapisz.**
BLACK DRAGON #5 — by **Claremont** and **Bolton.**
TIME SPIRITS #6 — by **Perry** and **Yeates.**
THE ONE #2 — by **Veitch.**
MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE #32 — **ALPHA FLIGHT AND THE X-MEN #1! X-MEN #200! THE BOZZ CHRONICLES! SIX FROM SIRIUS!** And then some!
THE INCREDIBLE HULK #313 — "Hook, Line and Sinker" by **Mantlo, Mignola** and **Talaoc.**
THE AVENGERS #261 — by **Stern, J. Buscema** and **Palmer.**
CONAN #176 — "Argos Rain" by **Owsley, J. Buscema** and **Camp.**
MARVEL TALES #181 — "The Birth of a Super Hero" from **AMAZING SPIDER-MAN** #42 by **Lee, Romita** and **Esposito.**
ROM #72 — by **Mantlo** and **Ditko.**
X-MEN #199 — "A Spiral Path" by **Claremont, Romita Jr.** and **Green.**
MOON KNIGHT #6 — by **Zelenetz, Warner** and **Cruz.**
POWER MAN AND IRON FIST #120 — "Dragonslayer" by **Owsley, Bright** and **Acerno.**
ROYAL ROY #4 — "The Gold-engage Bridge" by **DeCesare, Kremer** and **D'Agostino.**
MUPPET BABIES #4 — "The Strange TV Adventure" by **Kay, Severin** and **Roetcher.**
GET ALONG GANG #4 — "The Great Amusement Park Contest" by **Manak, Costanza** and **Roettcher.**
THE SWORD OF SOLOMON KANE #2 — by **Macchio** and **Blevins.**
G.I. JOE #41 — "Strategic Diplomacy" by **Hama, Whigham** and **Mushynsky.**
ETERNALS #2 — by **Gillis, S. Buscema** and **Gordon.**
MARVEL FANFARE #23 — "From the Ashes" by **McKenzie** and **Steacy.**
FANTASTIC FOUR #284 — "The Last Appearance of the Invisible Girl" by **Byrne** and **Gordon.**
PETER PARKER, THE SPECTACULAR SPIDER-MAN #108 — by **Peter David** and **Trevor Von Eeden.**
THE NEW DEFENDERS #149 — "Lonely as a Cloud" by **Gillis, Perlin** and **Nichols.**



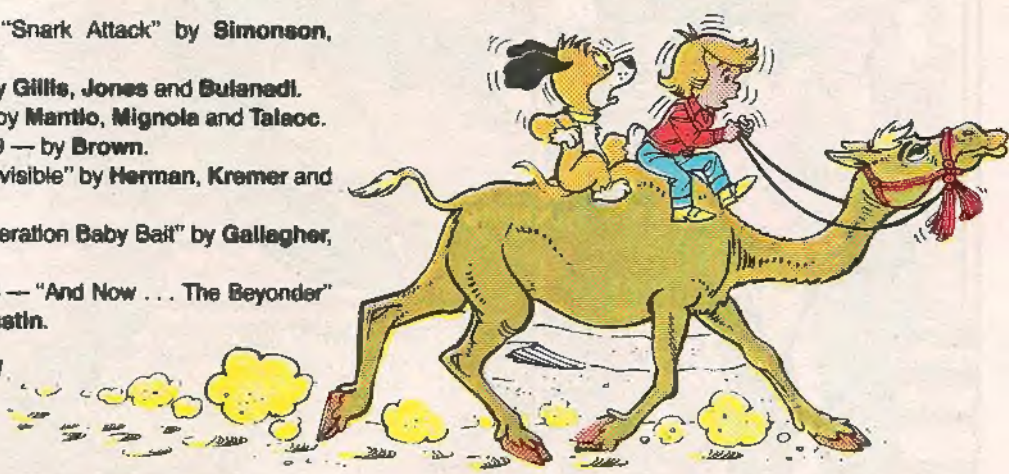
Power Man versus ***Iron Fist*** . . . *can their friendship survive?*

STAR WARS #101 — by **Duffy** and **Martin.**
THOR #361 — by **W. Simonson.**
TRANSFORMERS #10 — by **Budiansky, Johnson** and **Baker.**
ELFQUEST #4 — by **W.** and **R. Pini.**
SECRET WARS II #5 — by **Shooter, Milgrom** and **Leialoha.**
IRON MAN #200 — by **O'Neil, Bright, Akin** and **Garvey.**
SPIDER-MAN INDEX #8
DOCTOR WHO #14
COYOTE #14
SAVAGE TALES #1
EPIC ILLUSTRATED #32
MARVEL GRAPHIC NOVEL #18: **THE SHE-HULK**

Titles shipping in **August.**

THE THING #30 — by **Carlin** and **Wilson.**
DAREDEVIL #225 — by **O'Neil, Mazzuchelli** and **DeMulder.**
THE NEW MUTANTS #34 — by **Claremont** and **Leialoha.**
WEB OF SPIDER-MAN #9 — by **Fingeroth** and **McLeod.**
WEST COAST AVENGERS #3 — by **Englehart, Milgrom** and **Sinnott.**
PLANET TERRY #9 — by **Manak, Kremer** and **D'Agostino.**
FRAGGLE ROCK #5 — by **Kay** and **Severin.**
STRAWBERRY SHORTCAKE #5 — by **Kay, Post** and **Edelman.**
THUNDERCATS #1 — by **Michelinie, Mooney** and **Breeding.**
DREADSTAR AND COMPANY #6 — by **Starlin.**
SQUADRON SUPREME #4 — by **Gruenwald, Hall** and **Beatty.**
SECTAURS #4 — by **Mantlo, Geiger** and **DelBeato.**
THE INCREDIBLE HULK ANNUAL #14 — by **Byrne** and **S. Buscema.**
THE OFFICIAL HANDBOOK OF THE MARVEL UNIVERSE DELUXE EDITION #1
STARSTRUCK #5 — by **E. Lee** and **Kaluta.**
THE BOZZ CHRONICLES #1 — by **Michelinie** and **Blevins.**
THE LIFE OF CAPTAIN MARVEL #5 — by **Starlin** and **Diverse Hands.**
THE AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #271 — "Whatever Happened to Crusher Hogan?" by **DeFalco, Frenz** and **Rubinstein.**
CAPTAIN AMERICA #312 — by **Gruenwald, Neary** and **Janke.**
POWER PACK #17 — "Snark Attack" by **Simonson, Brigman** and **Wiacek.**
MICRONAUTS #15 — by **Gillis, Jones** and **Bulanadi.**
ALPHA FLIGHT #29 — by **Mantlo, Mignola** and **Talaoc.**
WALLY THE WIZARD #9 — by **Brown.**
TOP DOG #5 — "King Invisible" by **Herman, Kremer** and **Roettcher.**
HEATHCLIFF #5 — "Operation Baby Bait" by **Gallagher, Kremer** and **Roettcher.**
DOCTOR STRANGE #74 — "And Now . . . The Beyonder" by **Stern, Badger** and **Austin.**

GROO THE WANDERER #10 — by **Aragonés** with **Evanier.**
LONGSHOT #4 — by **Nocenti** and **Adams.**
THE VISION AND THE SCARLET WITCH #3 — by **Englehart, Howell** and **Mushynsky.**
ROM ANNUAL #4
THE FANTASTIC FOUR INDEX #3 — compiled by **Olshevsky.**
THE SAVAGE SWORD OF CONAN #118
THE BLACK DRAGON #6 — by **Claremont** and **Bolton.**
THE SISTERHOOD OF STEEL #6 — by **Marx** and **Vosburg.**
MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE #33 — History in the making! The birth of . . . **X-FACTOR!**
THE INCREDIBLE HULK #314 — by **Byrne** and **Wiacek.**
THE AVENGERS #262 — by **Stern, J. Buscema** and **Palmer.**
CONAN #177 — by **Owsley, Buscema** and **Camp.**
MARVEL TALES #182 — "Rhino on a Rampage" reprinting **AMAZING SPIDER-MAN** #43 by **Lee, Romita** and **Esposito.**
ROM #73 — by **Mantlo** and **Ditko.**
MOON KNIGHT #7 — by **Zelenetz, Warner** and **Cruz.**
G.I. JOE #42 — by **Hama, Whigham** and **Mushynsky.**
ETERNALS #3 — by **Gillis, S. Buscema** and **Gordon.**
X-MEN #200 — by **Claremont, Romita Jr.** and **Green.**
THOR ANNUAL #13 — by **Zelenetz** and **J. Buscema.**
DREADSTAR #21 — by **Starlin** and **De La Rosa.**
FANTASTIC FOUR #285 — by **Byrne** and **Gordon.**
IRON MAN #201 — by **O'Neil, Bright, Akin** and **Garvey.**
PETER PARKER THE SPECTACULAR SPIDER-MAN #109 — by **David, Buckler** and **Breeding.**
STAR WARS #102 — by **Duffy** and **Martin.**
THOR #362 — by **Simonson.**
TRANSFORMERS #11 — by **Budiansky, Johnson** and **Baker.**
ELFQUEST #5 — by **W.** and **R. Pini.**
SECRET WARS II #6 — by **Shooter, Milgrom** and **Leialoha.**
THE NEW DEFENDERS #150 — "The Stars in Their Courses" by **Gillis, Perlin** and **Nichols.**
SPIDER-MAN INDEX #9 — compiled by **Olshevsky.**
DOCTOR WHO #15
THE NEW MUTANTS SPECIAL #1 — by **Claremont** and **Adams.**
SIX FROM SIRIUS #1 — by **Moench** and **Gulacy.**
ALIEN LEGION #10
MARVEL GRAPHIC NOVEL #19: **THE WITCH QUEEN OF ACHERON,** by **Kraar, Kwapisz** and **Gil.**



Top Dog and Joey head for exotic locales . . . on the trail of an enemy agent!

NEWSWATCH

An itemized list of late-breaking news!

ITEM! Graphic Novels! You want 'em, we got 'em! **THE ALADDIN EFFECT** will be out in about a week — and **THE REVENGE OF THE LIVING MONOLITH** next month (for more info on it, check out both the Coming Attractions and our feature article in this issue)! But there's more! To satisfy your demands, here's a list of the next six Graphic Novels: Shipping in July will be **THE SHE-HULK**, by **John Byrne** and **Kim DeMulder**, featuring **the She-Hulk** versus **S.H.I.E.L.D.**; in August, **THE WITCH QUEEN OF ACHERON**, a **Conan** novel by **Don Kraar, Gary Kwapisz** and **Armando Gil**, with full painted color by **Julianna Ferriter**; in September, **GREENBERG THE VAMPIRE**, continuing the adventures of the world's weirdest vampire, by **J.M. DeMatteis** and **Mark Badger**; in October, **THE HILLS ARE ALIVE**, a **New Mutants** thriller by **Chris Claremont** and horrific great **Berni Wrightson**; in November, **ELEKTRA** by **Frank Miller**, featuring the long-awaited return of you-know-who; and in December, **MIRROR MIRROR**, a **Dr. Strange** novel by **J.M. DeMatteis** and **Dan Green**.

ITEM! If you've been following our More Coming Attractions feature closely, you'll have noticed that next month was to see the debut of both **THE OFFICIAL MARVEL INDEX TO THE FANTASTIC FOUR** and **THE OFFICIAL MARVEL INDEX TO MARVEL TEAM-UP**! Well as it turns out, we've gone into so much detail on our index to **THE AMAZING SPIDER-MAN** that it's going to run three issues longer than we expected! So we've delayed the release of the **TEAM-UP** index until the **AMAZING SPIDEY** one is complete! You can now expect to see the **TEAM-UP** index shipping in September! **George Olshevsky** and **Mark Gruenwald** are researching themselves senseless on the Marvel Indexes — they're determined to make 'em the ultimate reference work on Marvel's publishing history!

ITEM! The Newswatch column runs a little short this month, so we can inaugurate a brand-new feature for **MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE**! As you've probably noticed from the headline below, it's called *"The Mutant Report,"* and frankly, that's just what it is. We're going to keep you up-to-the-minute on what's doing and what's about to be doing with all of Marvel's mutants, from **the X-Men** to **Dazzler** to **Quicksilver** to **Willie Evans Junior**! In future installments, *The Mutant Report* will be its own department, independent of this column, taking up as many pages as need be. So let's get to it, shall we . . .

MARVEL TOP TEN

Not much room this issue, so we gotta make this brief! We promised to give you the **Top Ten** every issue and, by golly, here it is again! Sort of makes life easier when you know there's finally something you can always count on, doesn't it?

If you're just joining us, the Top Ten is simply a list of the best-selling Marvel comics. This month, we're featuring the **Top Ten** titles, sold only through Direct Sales outlets (no newsstand or subscription figures are included) for March 1985. Thanks to **Carol Kalish** for compiling this list. And now, without further comment, the **Top Ten** . . .

1 — **SECRET WARS II #1**
2 — **X-MEN #195**
3 — **CLOAK AND DAGGER #1**
4 — **WEB OF SPIDER-MAN #4**
5 — **ALPHA FLIGHT #24**
6 — **NEW MUTANTS #29**
7 — **FANTASTIC FOUR #280**
8 — **AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #266**
9 — **THOR #357**
10 — **AVENGERS #257**

— J.S.

NOW, I HAVE HERE TWO TICKETS FOR THE SHOW REED AND SUE SO HIGHLY RECOMMENDED.
WHAT SAY WE TRY TO FORGET THE WOES OF THE WORLD FOR AN EVENING, AND JUST ENJOY OURSELVES?
SOUNDS GOOD TO ME!
AND I KNOW JUST HOW I WANT TO START!

EXTRA THE MUTANT REPORT EXTRA

VOLUME 1 "The Next Step in News Evolution!" NUMBER 1

NEW 'FACTOR' IN MUTANT TEAMS

You may have been hearing rumors about this one. Well, the rumors are true! This October, you'll see the first issue of **X-FACTOR**, a brand-new monthly series featuring Marvel's *original* mutants! That's right, **Cyclops**, **Iceman**, **the Beast** and **the Angel** are back together, with a surprise fifth member that has to be seen to be believed! We're pulling out all the stops to make **X-FACTOR** the absolute best book possible! It'll be written and inked by none other than **Bob Layton**, who'll be aided and abetted by penciler **Jackson Guice** and editor **Mike Carlin**. And as if that wasn't enough top talent, the **X-FACTOR** team is kicking off their first issue with a little help from their friends! **Chris Claremont**, **John Byrne**, **Roger Stern**, **Peter Gillis**, **John Buscema**, **Don Perlin** and **John Romita Junior** are all contributing to a four-issue "overture" that'll lead right into **X-FACTOR** #1! **THE NEW DEFENDERS** #153, **X-MEN** #201, **AVENGERS** #263 and **FANTASTIC FOUR** #286 are the issues — and together with **X-FACTOR**, they make one quintuple-sized premiere extravaganza you'll never forget!

MUTANTS FOR AFRICA

The X-Men are about to tackle a real super villain — world hunger. This summer, we'll be publishing **THE X-MEN BENEFIT SPECIAL FOR ETHIOPIA**, a special one-shot 48-page comic, distributed in both newsstands and direct outlets. All profits from the **BENEFIT SPECIAL** will go to charity to help relief efforts in Ethiopia.

As soon as the project was created, by **Bernie Wrightson** and **Jim Starlin**, **Jim Shooter** enthusiastically approved it, and **Wrightson**, **Starlin**, and **Chris Claremont** went on a talent hunt. And the list of people they lined up to work on the **BENEFIT SPECIAL** is truly astounding. The writers involved are: **Stan Lee**, **Chris Claremont**, **Stephen King**, **Harlan Ellison**, **Denny O'Neil**, **Jim Shooter**, **Archie Goodwin**, **Louise Simonson**, **Bill Mantlo**, **Jo Duffy**, **George R.R. Martin**, **Ann Nocenti**, **Ed Bryant**, **Bruce Jones**, **Alan Moore**, **Mike Baron**, **Mike Grell** and **Steve Englehart**. The pencilers will be: **John Romita Junior**, **Jim Starlin**, **John Buscema**, **Paul Gulacy**, **Steve Rude**, **Jackson Guice**, **Gray Morrow**, **Brent Anderson**, **Frank Miller**, **Mike Kaluta**, **Alan Weiss**, **John Byrne**, **Brian Bolland**, **Bernie Wrightson**, **Bret Blevins**, **Charles Vess**, **Richard Corben**, **Herb Trimpe** and **Howard Chaykin**. The inkers will be: **Al Gordon**, **Klaus Janson**, **Bob Layton**, **Carl Potts**, **Steve Leialoha**, **Gray Morrow**, **Dan Green**, **Bill Sienkiewicz**, **Al Milgrom**, **Joe Rubinstein**, **Terry Austin**, **P. Craig Russell**, **Jeff Jones**, **Al Williamson**, **Jon Jay Muth**, **Richard Corben**, **John Severin** and **Walt Simonson**. Everyone gladly agreed to donate their time to the project — and in fact, there's a long list of backup people willing to step in should any of these creators have to be replaced.

The **BENEFIT SPECIAL** will center around **the X-Men** battling "The Entity," a mutant who has existed since the beginning of time which feeds on the pain and suffering of other beings. "The story deals with the question, 'What can one man do,'" says **Chris Claremont**. "And the knowledge that, while **the X-Men** might be able to save the universe, they can't always save the people in it." But they can certainly try, and so can we. On **THE X-MEN BENEFIT SPECIAL FOR ETHIOPIA**, we can unabashedly say this: Buy it. Get all your friends to. You'll not only be getting a story by a virtual Who's Who of comics talent — but every penny we make goes right into one of the most important battles of our time — ending world hunger.

NEW ART FOR NEW MUTANTS

With issue #32, **Bill Sienkiewicz** will be taking a leave of absence from **THE NEW MUTANTS**. Don't despair — **Bill** will still be very much present at Marvel Comics — he just wants to concentrate on other projects near and dear to his heart for a while, like the **KINGPIN Graphic Novel** he's doing with **Frank Miller**, and one or two other things that we'll announce when all the details are set.

In the interim, two very talented artists have been lined up to fill in for **Bill**. The first will be **Steve Leialoha**, who's managed to find some spare time in his busy schedule inking **SECRET WARS II**. **Steve's** no stranger to mutants, having provided the art for last year's **X-MEN ANNUAL**, and has a lot of experience collaborating with **Chris Claremont**, on a long run of **SPIDER-WOMAN** stories. **Steve** will be bringing his brand of graphic excitement to three issues of **THE NEW MUTANTS**, after which **Mary Wilshire** will step in to pencil the next three issues. You've probably seen **Mary's** work on **RED SONJA** and the **SPIDER-MAN AND POWER PACK** comic. But **Mary's** also been working on a **FIRESTAR Limited Series** with **Tom DeFalco**, which makes her pinch-hitting on **THE NEW MUTANTS** particularly apropos. Keep an eye on this series — even without **Sienkiewicz**, it's still going to be breaking artistic boundaries!

AN EPIC OF LOVE AND WAR . . .

Balder And Karnilla™

by **Dwight Jon Zimmerman**

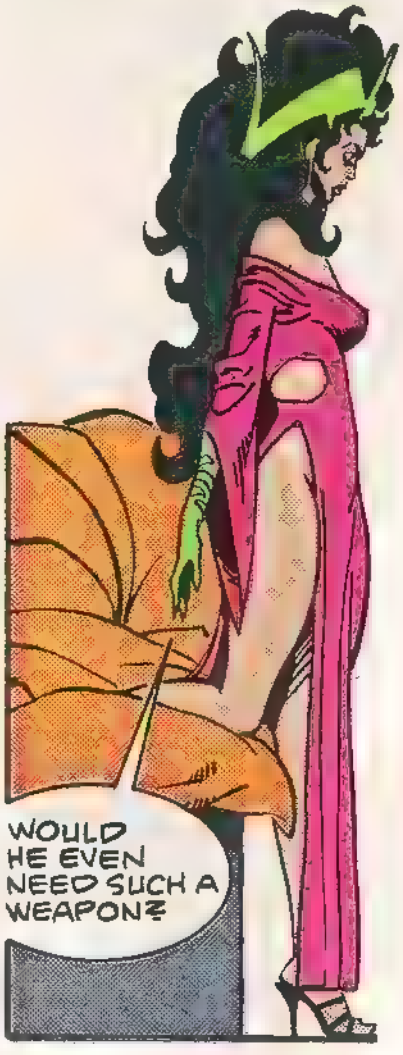
The history of literature is rich with the records of the great struggles endured by men and women united by love, but cruelly separated by fate, circumstance and sometimes their immutable beliefs: **Orpheus**, bravely singing before the Lord of the Dead himself to win the return of his wife, **Eurydice**, to the land of the living; the star-crossed romance between **Tristan, King Arthur's** strongest knight, and the fair **Isolde**; and now that of Asgard's noblest warrior, **Balder**, with the Norn realm's imperious queen, **Karnilla**, in the epic four-issue Limited Series, **BALDER AND KARNILLA**.

Written by **Walt Simonson** and penciled and inked by **Sal Buscema**, this bi-monthly Limited Series not only probes and reveals the tempestuous, paradoxical and seemingly contradictory romance that has tortured the lives of both **Balder** and **Karnilla**, it also heralds a new war that is about to sweep an Asgard struggling to rebuild itself after its brush with annihilation at the hand of **Surtur**.

Series editor, **Ralph Macchio**, stated that the events chronicled in the Limited Series will be closely tied with **THOR** beginning with the story in **THOR** #260. And, Ralph said, "**BALDER AND KARNILLA** will have a number of themes. Politics — the relationship of political power with some of the sleazy things going on in Asgard, and the strength of one man's — or god's — uncorruptable will and how it can bend almost anything if he so chooses. And it is also about the redemption of character."

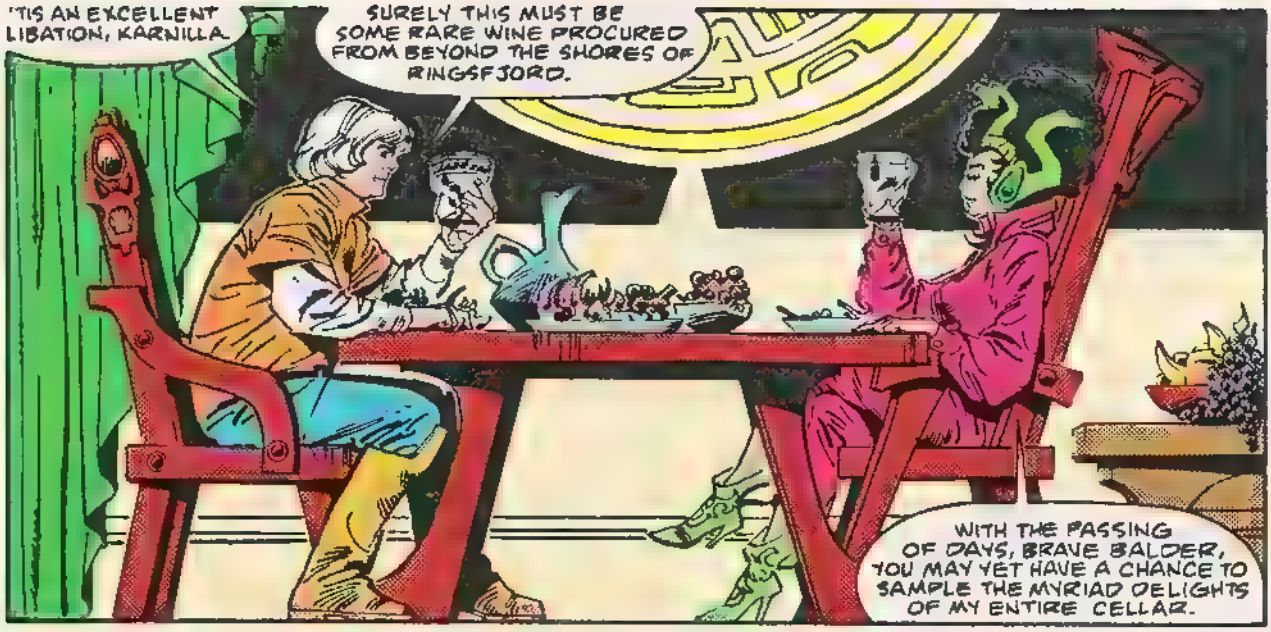
Ralph added, "It's really going to be what a Limited Series should be. It will develop the characters to their fullest potential. **Walt** is going to be using the Limited Series to focus on **Balder**, on his character, on his relationship with **Karnilla** and on what is going to happen in Asgard. He's really going to say something in this Limited Series about politics and interpersonal relationships — with a lot of fighting in between."

Because **BALDER AND KARNILLA** will be so closely intertwined with what will be happening in **THOR**, **Walt** offered this background to show what led up to the Limited Series and how he arranged for it to fit in to the continuity of **THOR**. "What I've tried to do in **THOR** is present the stones in a way that suggests the old Icelandic sagas — which is where a lot of information we have about **Thor** and Asgard comes from. To do this, what I've tried to do is set up themes for a cycle of stories. The individual tales are individual stories, but they all have a theme that links them with the other tales. The first cycle of stones was about the war with **Surtur**. At the conclusion of that cycle I tried to set up a new set of problems that would begin the second cycle. That set of problems revolves around the fact that **Odin** is gone. Who rules next in Asgard? That question is what the **THOR** series is now dealing with. This cycle will be resolved around #365; don't shoot me if I miss that by an issue or so. We will then go into the third cycle of stories, called 'The Frost Giant/Asgard War.' **The Frost Giants** are the traditional enemies of the Norse gods, and **Thor**, in particular. In the Marvel version of Norse mythology, when **the Frost Giants** learn that **Odin** is gone, they will figure that now is the perfect time for them to attack and destroy Asgard. This all leads me into the **BALDER AND KARNILLA** Limited Series because the opening salvo of the war will occur in the first issue of the Limited Series."



During the time of the succession to the throne of Asgard, **Balder** has remained in **Karnilla's** realm. And it is in that realm we find him at the opening of the first issue of the Limited Series, talking about the fabled Magic Sword of **Frey** — a sword so powerful that it can cut anything and literally fight by itself! **Frey** lost the sword in his own quest for love. And nobody knows where it went, though many were the attempts to find the weapon. We discover, in that first issue as well, the reason for the searchers' failures — **Karnilla** was the one who stole the sword and it is now resting in the deepest chambers of her armory.

The sword plays an increasingly important role in the Limited Series which sees **Balder** not only become embroiled in the war against **the Frost**


'TIS AN EXCELLENT LIBATION, KARNILLA.
SURELY THIS MUST BE SOME RARE WINE PROCURED FROM BEYOND THE SHORES OF RINGSFJORD.
WITH THE PASSING OF DAYS, BRAVE BALDER, YOU MAY YET HAVE A CHANCE TO SAMPLE THE MYRIAD DELIGHTS OF MY ENTIRE CELLAR.

Giants, but also involuntarily return to Hel! According to **Walt**, "The reason for this is that some issues back, in **THOR**, I had an episode about some mortals eating some magic cookies. The mortals who ate those cookies had their souls transported to Hel, even though their bodies remained on Earth. At the end of that story, **Thor** vowed to go to Hel and try to save those souls when he had the time to, because they had been taken unjustly. Now that time has come. And **Thor** has not forgotten his promise. The trick about going into Hel is that going down there is not so difficult. A number of people and beings know the way down. But nobody really knows the way back — only **Balder** has entered Hel and lived to return and tell the tale. So **Thor** calls upon **Balder** to give him a hand, to kind of act as a guide, really, to get everyone out again when the time comes."

As you can imagine, this will not be an easy decision for **Balder**. **Balder's** experience in Hel was worse than what anyone believed possible. "But he's going to do it, because he's a noble guy," **Walt** said.

Balder's decision to help **Thor** causes an immediate and spiteful reaction from **Karnilla**. She does *not* want **Balder** to go. She cannot countenance losing him again. But **Balder** remains adamant. And, royally miffed because he will not obey her, she withholds from an unsuspecting **Balder** something that she can do to aid him. "She will have cause to regret that," **Walt** said.

The quest into Hel continues on into **THOR**. With the second issue of the Limited Series, **Balder** returns to the Norn realm to discover that it has been ravaged and **Karnilla** kidnapped by **the Frost Giants**. From then on, **Balder**, in the Limited Series, pursues **Karnilla's** captors and does everything he can to try and defeat this, the first blow in **the Frost Giant's** war against Asgard.

But why, since she represents all that he despises, does **Balder** embark on this quest to rescue **Karnilla**? "Agnar, the messenger sent by **Thor**, asked **Balder** the same question, 'What do you see in **Karnilla**?' " **Walt** said. "And **Balder** will clearly express his feelings for **Karnilla** in the first issue." As **Walt** interprets, **Balder** sees the good in **Karnilla**. "She's certainly self-interested," **Walt** said. "But a lot of what she does, she does out of a love for **Balder**. This is maybe her one saving grace." And, as for their relationship in general, **Walt** said, "It's not a precise relationship, which is one of the things I find fascinating about it. We don't quite know what to expect. That's really going to be the dynamic element that I'll be exploring."

Ralph Macchio observed, "I think what **Karnilla** sees in the relationship is something about the purity of **Balder**. Something that anyone who lives with corruption loves or wants is something in their life that is incredibly pure. And **Karnilla** sees in **Balder** the purest, most untouchable thing in Asgard. And she wants it for herself." **Walt** quickly agreed, "Oh, definitely. I think that if **Balder** became corrupt and evil, **Karnilla** would lose interest in him. I guess that is one of the things that keeps him eternally fascinating for her."

On **Karnilla**, herself, **Walt** said, "I'd like **Karnilla** to grow during the course of this Limited Series so that we have

an opportunity to see more of her. One of the reasons you enjoy doing a Limited Series like this is because you can focus on supporting characters who can't get that much attention in the regular series." And **Walt** would like to see **Karnilla** develop enough so that, by the end of the Limited Series, if she was faced with similar circumstances to what she encountered at the beginning of the Limited Series, she would not make the same decisions.

Walt is very excited about this multi-level "juggling act" he is performing — wrapping-up the second cycle of stories in the **THOR** series, concurrently beginning a new crisis for **Thor** in another set of tales, and uncovering new facets in all the characters. It's a big task, but one that **Walt** has completely worked out. "On these stories you have two levels, your personal stories which deal with relationships and conflicts on a close, intimate, level, and then you have the cosmic-level conflict, particularly in **THOR** where you have gods and demons and large-scale events." And once the succession to the throne of Asgard problem is solved, and the Limited Series concludes, the conflict that has been building up in **BALDER AND KARNILLA** will shift over to **THOR** and the Frost Giant/Asgard War will be resolved there

As anyone who has been reading **THOR** already knows, **Walt's** depiction of the Thunder God has made him one of the most popular artists in comics. The experience he is having coupling his vision with that of another of Marvel's great visualizers, **Sal Buscema**, has been more rewarding than even he anticipated. This happy collaboration began in **THOR** #355. "I had a delightful time working with **Sal** on **THOR**," **Walt** said. "**Sal** gave me everything I asked for — and more. It was a real pleasure to write from his art. **Sal** is one of the guys whose work I read back before I became a professional. And it has been a real personal joy working and talking with him now."

"I'm really having a ball with it!" **Sal Buscema** said. "I just wish that there were more things like **BALDER AND KARNILLA** to do because it is so much fun. I don't mean to say that the other stories I've done aren't, just that this one is really special." Did **Sal** find himself doing the Limited Series differently? "I don't know if you could say I'm approaching it any differently," **Sal** replied. "**BALDER AND KARNILLA** is different in the sense that it's not the usual super hero thing. We are dealing with mythology here. That in itself makes the story different."

One of the points that **Sal** was quick to point out about his and **Walt's** collaboration is that **Walt** has given him some of the most visually exciting plots he's ever received. "That is why I'm enjoying working on **Walt's** plot so much," **Sal** said. "He is an illustrator as well as a writer, and I think that he has a sense for pictures that a writer, alone, doesn't. And I say this not being derogatory to writers. Writers paint their pictures with words — their thinking is different. **Walt** is thinking in terms of visuals. What kind of pictures is this story going to make? What opportunity to do some very powerful and dramatic story-telling pictures are there in this? Because an artist has the tendency to think more in those terms than a writer, **Walt** has made my job very easy.

"Another thing that has made this Limited Series such a joy for me is that **Walt** really does his homework," **Sal** added. "He's researched his subject very well and knows what he's doing. That in itself is the foundation for some very good storytelling. I have a feeling that **Walt** is becoming the authority on Norse mythology."

For his part, **Walt** said, "I think that **Sal** is now doing the best work of his career. This is very heartening to guys like me who are younger than **Sal**, to see guys like him who have been in the business for so many years and see that they *are* doing better than ever."

THE NEW TALENT DEPARTMENT

by **Adam Phillips**

Every day we at Marvel receive a new pile of submissions, all from fans with the same goal — to work at Marvel. And despite what you might think from what we usually print here, not all the submissions we receive are from would-be artists. We get samples of all sorts: plots, scripts, inking, coloring, and even original characters! And if there's one thing we've noticed, it's that there are trends in these submissions — that newcomers, who lack experience in selling work to seasoned editors, will try things that can't really be used in Marvel Comics. It isn't because they aren't thoughtful with their work, or that they lack talent — it's because they don't have someone to point out the pitfalls a beginner can fall into if he's not careful. We created **THE OFFICIAL MARVEL TRY-OUT BOOK** and **HOW TO DRAW COMICS THE MARVEL WAY** to help out beginning talents, but occasionally, we'll devote an installment of this column to the subject — rather than showcasing a new pro (or about-to-be-pro), we'll try to advise and encourage those of you who need a little direction to make your samples the best possible.

This installment of the New Talent Department focuses on a plot submission from **Dave Hudak**, a freshman student of creative writing at Bowling Green State University in Ohio. **Dave's** been interested in writing for Marvel ever since he saw **Jim Shooter's** letter about submitting work back in **MARVEL FANFARE #2**, and has not only written lots of comics material, but also writes songs. He was a writer for his high school newspaper, until he quit, dissatisfied with the approach the paper was taking. Rather than giving up entirely, **Dave** started his own school paper! He has also written a short story called **DRAGONSTAR** which was published in an Ohio regional students' newspaper. **Dave's** plot was chosen because, while it certainly shows promise and a lot of effort, it has many of the typical problems new writers run into. Anyone interested in sending plots to Marvel should probably read the plot and this article, and then go over his or her submissions carefully, to see if any of the same critiques could be applied to their work.

Dave chose to plot a **Captain America** story. Here's what he sent us:

* * *

***Alan Bargonova**, the Russian general who defected to the U.S. and now resides in New York City, walks calmly from his garage late one night after finishing his talk-show radio program, characteristically speaking for American ideals. A massive shadow falls across his path, and **the Red Guardian** (Russia's answer to **Captain America**) stands in his path. **The Guardian** says that, because the General would not return to Russia, the KGB has decided to use the General as an example to other defectors. **Bargonova** never even gets to scream.*

***Captain America** dives into the middle of a gang fight. Twisting and whirling like a one-man peace-keeping force, he soon subdues the fifteen youths who fought for possession of one alley. A paddywagon appears. **Cap** makes his apologies for not having the time to fill out a report, and then tears off, streaking fast into the distance.*

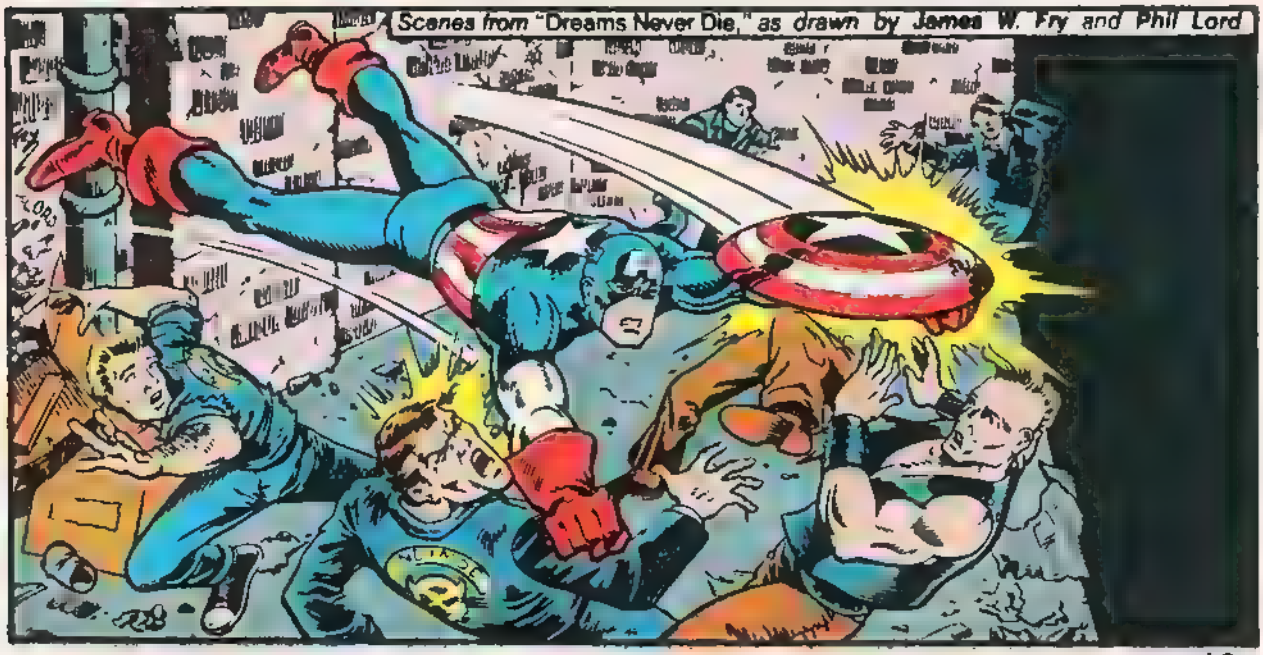
At home, he reclines in his easy chair, pleased that he made it home to listen to the Alan Bargonova Show. Listening, he feels like he's back in the forties again — huddled around the radio listening to someone who says good things about his country.

*An announcer breaks in on the pre-recorded program, telling of the sudden, tragic death of **Alan Bargonova**. **Cap** hangs his head, muttering, 'Damn . . . "*

*It's two days later, and **Cap's** influence has discovered the location of **Bargonova's** wake (which has been closed to the public due to **Bargonova's** celebrity status). **Cap** slowly solemnly walks into the parlor, passing by what appears to be just another mourner. The man stiffens, reacting to **Cap**.*

*Casually, the man slips from the room. He saunters over to a pay phone in the parking lot. He makes a call, and his muttered Russian identification is difficult to overhear. Toward the end of the conversation, he warns in English, "And, Comrade, you are to observe **the Captain**, to make sure he knows nothing. You will not attack." The KGB Control Agent hangs up the phone, and leaves.*

*While this goes on, **Cap** approaches*



*Scenes from "Dreams Never Die," as drawn by **James W. Fry** and **Phil Lord***

Bargonova's widow. He pulls a single flower from under his shield, handing it to her and expressing both his respect for her husband's opinions and his sympathy for her. He's as sensitive as he is eloquent, and then turns and leaves the widow in her grief.

As Cap returns from the wake, the Red Guardian (who's obviously decided to disobey the Control Agent's orders) attacks. While this young agent lacks experience, he's determined to avenge his predecessor by destroying the one man the original Red Guardian could not defeat — Captain America.

The battle is fast and fitful, ending with the poor Captain (who was taken by surprise!) pinned mercilessly on a rooftop, taking blow after pounding blow to the midsection!!! Suddenly, the Guardian's cowl headphone sounds, telling him to return immediately or to be left behind. As he leaves, the Soviet can't resist ribbing Cap just one more time, he turns back to the bloodied and battered Cap, and adds, "By the way, I killed Bargonova . . . "

Cap struggles to his feet. Wiping the blood from his eye, he runs his other hand over his ribs, counting four broken and at least as many bruised.

Cap doesn't care. A man is dead His crime was loving freedom. His murderers will not escape.

The Guardian, the Control Agent, and four KGB operatives wait nervously for their ride to the airport. Cap, after dogging the Guardian's trail for miles, bursts through the door. Rage gives him the power to make up for his injuries. He leaps, releasing his shield. It rebounds off one agent and into another, incapacitating them.

Cap flips over, spinning into the other two plainclothes operatives. He kicks each with one leg apiece, and snaps up a gun as the two fall unconscious to the ground. Whipping the gun behind his head, it connects with the Control Agent, taking him out. Wheeling, Cap faces the Guardian and points one accusing finger. "You're mine," he exhales through lungfuls of breath.

The youth, shaken by Cap's display, attacks, hesitantly tossing his own belt discus. Cap silently snatches it out of the air, and careens it back, sailing right behind it. One solid right cross to the jaw later, and Cap grips the Guardian's shirt, holding the dazed Soviet agent closely, "I ought to kill you for . . . "

And then Cap remembers just why Alan Bargonova loved this country so much: because anyone, and everyone, has certain rights that no one, not even a super hero, can take away. Cap draws a deep but painful breath, loosens his grip on the Guardian, and says what Bargonova himself would want said to his murderer, "You have the right to remain silent; anything you say can and will . . . "

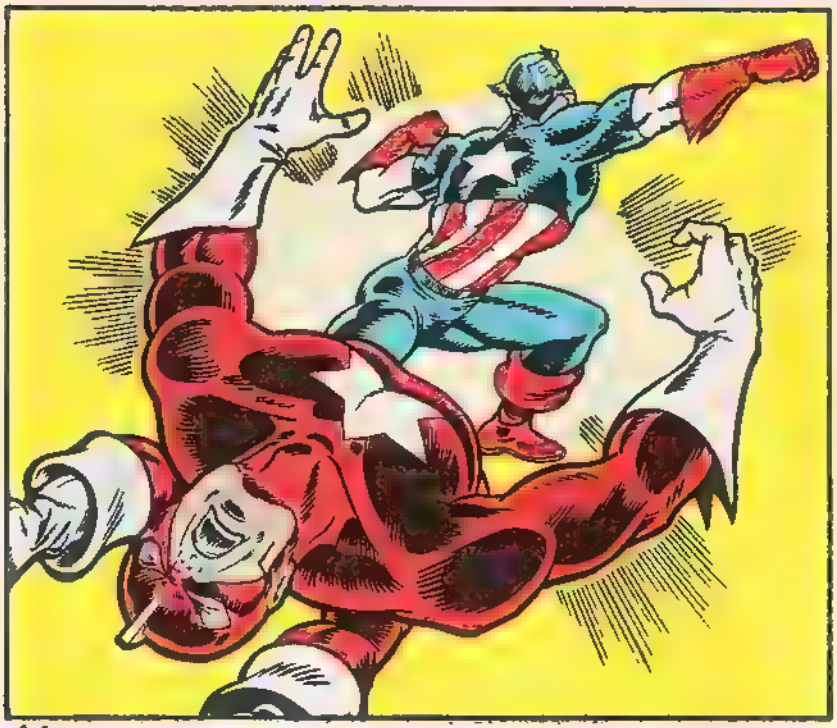
* * *

We took this plot over to **Mike Carlin**, the editor of **CAPTAIN AMERICA** (as well as a former writer of **Cap's** adventures), and asked him to go over the story and give us an honest critique. One of the first things **Mike** noticed was that **Dave** doesn't have a strong grasp of **Captain America's** personality. Said **Mike**: "**Captain America** is out of character throughout. He does things that **Captain America** just would not do." As an example, there's **Cap's** lack of time for the police procedure which followed his subduing the street gang. "**Captain America** would definitely fill out a report. He would do it by the book. He certainly wouldn't ignore procedure to race home to listen to a radio show." Besides that, **Cap**, who has a very strong sense of patriotism already, shouldn't need to listen to a patriotic radio show to feel good about America. It's good that **Dave** chose to show **Cap's** love of country, but it would be better done through his actions, or **Cap** showing the American ideals to someone else, rather than passively listening to rhetoric.

Captain America has also frequently been called the greatest hand-to-hand combat expert in comics. Early in this plot **Cap** mops the floor with fifteen, count 'em, fifteen youths, but soon has problems with just one fighter. On this **Mike** said: "This young agent (the new **Red Guardian**) lacks experience — he disregards orders to attack **Captain America**. And he *trashes* **Captain America**! **Cap** should rarely even be touched in a fight." The new **Red Guardian** might be a fantastic scrapper, but this would need to be established — and even so would be hard to believe, given **Cap's** reputation. All we know, going into the fight, is that **the Red Guardian** is young and inexperienced — hardly qualities that would make him a better fighter than **Cap**. But **Cap** doesn't even get the chance to fight back.

However, when **Cap** makes his comeback, the Soviet agents don't stand a chance. **Mike** questioned this scene: "**The Guardian**, the control agent and four KGB guys wait nervously for their ride to the airport. Why are they nervous now? They got a guy who can *beat up* **Captain America**." Not only that, but **Cap** now has four broken ribs, and there are five men facing him. So why does **Cap** not only win this fight against greater odds than before, why does he take out the new **Red Guardian** with *one punch*? Dramatic it may be, but it doesn't hold together

Dave also didn't tell us much about the new **Red Guardian**. "We don't know why **the Guardian** does any of the things he does," said **Mike**. "Besides the fact that he is not even the original **Guardian**, who is this guy?" One important question that was not raised is this: why did **the Guardian** disobey his orders? If he's anxious to prove himself, it must be stated (although all he'd prove this way is that he is not reliable) **Mike** said: "If you must use **the Red Guardian** and **Captain America** in this story, give me a story about why this **Red Guardian**



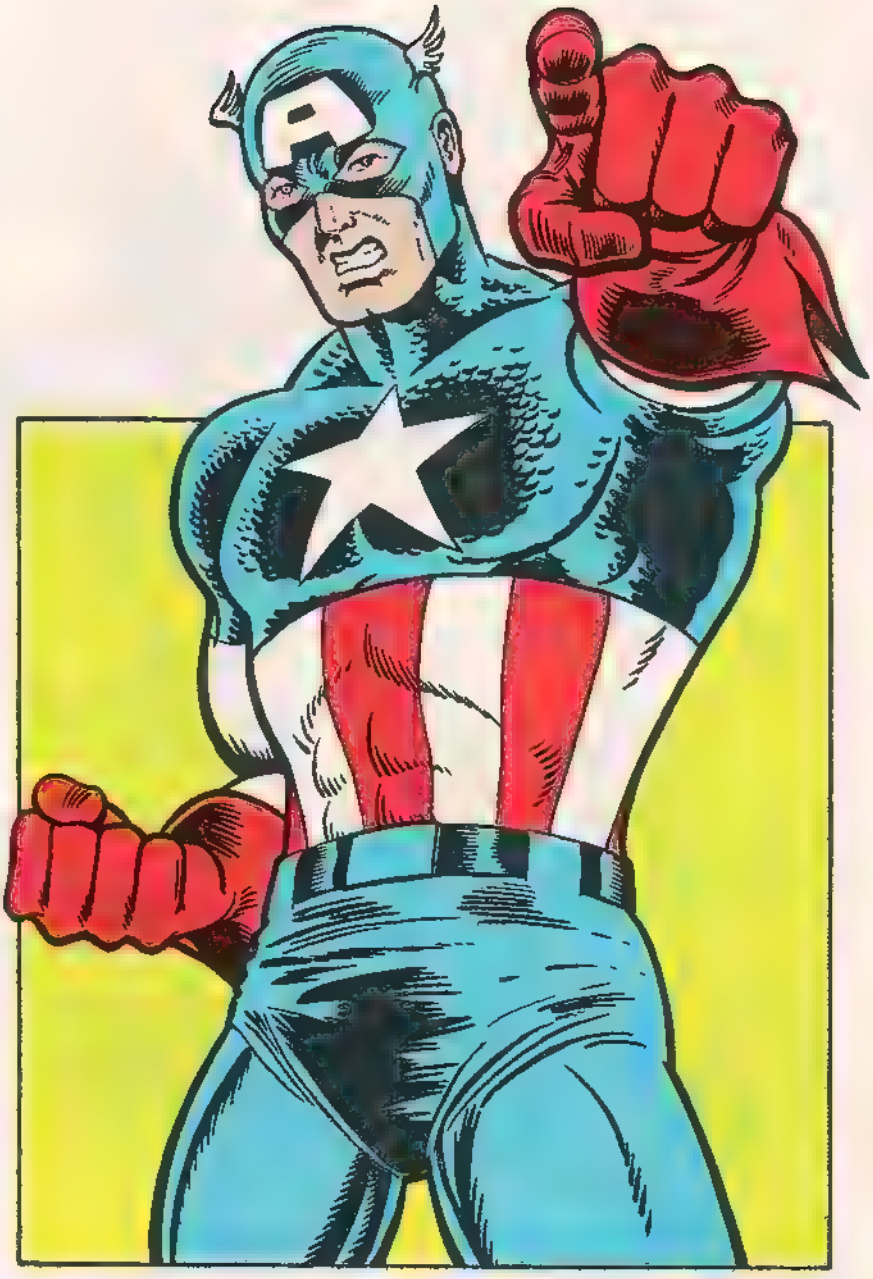
guy disobeys his orders and goes after **Captain America**."

It was also a little difficult to feel any sympathy for **Alan Bargonova**. (By the way, Russian names that end in "-ova" are the feminine form. His name should have been "**Bargonov**.") On this **Mike** said: "All we get out of this story is a dead Russian guy we don't even care about, because we've never seen him before. He's not set up. You have to introduce a character and care about him a little bit before you kill him, or if you kill him in the beginning we've got to be told why he's such a great guy, not just because he's from Russia and likes America. That's not enough. It's okay to start a story with a death, but tell me about the guy's background, through his friends, from flashbacks, or from what **Cap** learns about him in the course of chasing these guys."

The story structure could use work as well. "Right at the beginning we see the murder of this guy. That starts off the story with something interesting, to catch the reader's attention." Right after that, though, **Dave** ran into trouble. **Mike** put it simply: "The gang fight doesn't have anything to do with the story." While it's a good idea to establish **Cap's** battle prowess, this seemed to be a gratuitous fight scene, with no real connection to the plot.

Another problem was the funeral. "Funerals generally aren't closed to the public, and besides, this guy's not the president or anything. Sure, he's a celebrity, but a radio talk show guy? They're not too celebrated these days." And there seems to be no real reason for the Russian agent to be at the funeral, aside from the convenience of getting him to meet and fight **Cap**.

Mike also offered some more general advice: "In Marvel comics we don't usually say 'damn,' and **Captain America** definitely wouldn't. During the fight scene **Cap** picks up a *gun*. Now at least he doesn't shoot anyone," which would be *way* out of character, "but he picks up a gun to hit the Russians with. He shouldn't have to hit them with anything, except maybe his shield." And, even more generally: "Basically, there's no conflict in here. **Cap** does not have to make a choice." A good story should be about more than just a physical conflict — it's got to have a human element, where we learn about the character, or see his beliefs tested. **Cap** should be presented with more of a choice than figuring out who to hit. The most that we see happening with **Cap** in this story is that he realizes what makes America great. But that's something **Cap** has known and understood for a long time — and it would take far more than a single murder to make him lose his grasp of his ideals. In addition, **Mike** thought the story was "a little too simplistic." The Russians are bad guys, Americans are good guys, "and it's very obvious." We need reasons why the good guys are good and the bad guys are bad, beyond simply their country of origin.



Dave also didn't need to be so dramatic in his descriptions. Instead of saying **Cap** was "taking blow after pounding blow to the midsection!!!" he might have stated the facts more directly. We ask that plot submissions be kept short, to make it easier to read through them, and by being business-like and direct about what's happening in the plot, would-be writers will have more room to tell the story. The editor is concerned with finding out that there is a good solid story to tell — the excitement and drama of individual moments can be saved until the short plot is expanded to a full synopsis, which the artist would work from.

All this might seem like harsh criticism, but it's the sort of thing anyone must go through to break into comics. This is at least **Dave's** second submission (we talked over an earlier **Daredevil** plot he sent before he wrote this), and with his enthusiasm, we're sure we'll see more and better material in the future. Above all, a would-be comics professional must be ready to practice and study and learn. With enough thought, application, and effort, **Dave** can be confident that he'll one day see his name in a Marvel Comics credit box. And when he does, we'll be happy to see him.

BACK AT THE DAWNING OF THE MARVEL AGE OF COMICS, STAN LEE STUMBLED ACROSS THE INGREDIENT THAT HAD BEEN LARGELY MISSING IN SUPER HERO COMICS UP TO THAT POINT: SUPER VILLAINS.

OF COURSE, THE RED SKULL HAD BEEN CREATED BACK IN THE EARLY FORTIES, AND MARVELS' COMPETITORS HAD BUILT UP A SMALL BUT IMPRESSIVE STABLE OF COSTUMED ARCH FOES FOR THEIR CHARACTERS--

--BUT IT WAS STAN WHO FIRST REALIZED YOU COULD GET MORE EXCITEMENT OUT OF YOUR COMICS IF YOUR GOOD GUYS REGULARLY FOUGHT BAD GUYS WITH ENOUGH POWER TO GIVE 'EM A REAL RUN FOR THEIR MONEY--

--AND IT SURE DIDN'T HURT IF THEY SHARED THE SAME FASHION CONSULTANT!

RATHER THESE GENTLEM... MAN, MAGNETO, EGGHEA... DOCTOMMU, THE VULTURE,... TOAD--THE LIST GOES ON A...

AND THAT'S WHERE WE'... GOING TODAY--TO THE ... END OF THAT LIST.

THE RAVEN

OUTLAW HARRY KANE STUMBLES ACROSS A MAGIC INDIAN POTION (INDIANS AGAIN!) AND IS TRANSFORMED INTO HURRICANE; TRULY THE FASTEST GUN IN THE WEST. IT HAPPENED IN TWO-GUN KID #70 (JULY 1964). TWO-GUN LETS HARRY TRIP HIMSELF UP (LITERALLY) AT SUPER-SPEED, AND BY THE TIME THE CURTAIN COMES DOWN, OUR ERSTWHILE SPEEDSTER IS FULL OF REPENTANCE... WHICH MIGHT HAVE SOMETHING TO DO WITH THE FACT THAT HE ALSO HAS A BROKEN ANKLE...

the PURPL...

IT TOOK AWHILE, BUT THE ... THAT THE PURPLE PHANTOM ... Y'SEE, HUNK HONDO DYED H... PHOSPHORESCENT PAINT W... AND BY WRAPPING THE UNO... AROUND HIMSELF, HE SEEM...

A BLACKSMITH GONE WRONG, IRON MASK BATTLED KID COLT ON 3 OCCASIONS (ISSUES 110, 114 AND 121, 1963-1964). DESPITE BEING TOTALLY ENCASED IN ARMOR, KID COLT KEPT RETURNING THIS FRONTIER DOCTOR DOOM BACK INTO THE WAITING ARMS OF THE LAW.

IRONMASK

RED RAVEN

Y'SEE, PRIOR TO THAT, THE MOST POWERFUL BEINGS BETWEEN TWO COVERS SPENT MOST OF THEIR TIME ROUNDING UP BANK ROBBERS, RESCUING KITTENS FROM TREES, AND HELPING LITTLE OLD ALIENS SAFELY ACROSS THE GALAXY.

STAN CHANGED ALL THAT. OR EN DID: DR. DOOM, KANG, THE MOLE O, DR. OCTOPUS, RAMA-TUT, MYSTERIO, THE LIZARD, BARON MORDO, THE NAP ON.

BE CERY

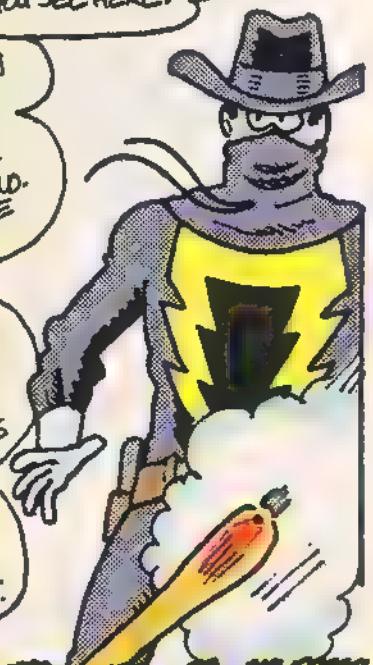
BECAUSE STAN GOT CARRIED AWAY WITH THE INITIAL FLUSH OF MARVEL'S SUCCESS, HE THOUGHT SUPER VILLAINS BELONGED EVERYWHERE

EVEN IN MARVEL'S WESTERN TITLES.

IT WAS A TREND THAT DIDN'T LAST LONG, BUT WHILE IT DID IT PRODUCED THE COSTUMED OWLHOOTS YOU SEE HERE.

FROM THE TOP THEN: THE RAVEN APPEARED IN THE 35TH ISSUE OF THE RAWHIDE KID (AUG. 1963). HE HAD NO POWERS -- HE JUST USED HIS OUTFIT TO HIDE HIS REAL IDENTITY OF THORN TRASK FROM THE WORLD. AT STORIES END, HE DIED IN A MINE CAVE-IN, TO BE HEARD FROM NEVERMORE.

SHORTLY THEREAFTER (#38, FEB 1964), THE RAWHIDE KID CAME UP AGAINST THE RED RAVEN. THANKS TO A SPECIAL SET OF WINGS HE OBTAINED FROM AN INDIAN IN PRISON (!), RED RAVEN (THAT'S HIS REAL NAME) TERRORIZES THE WEST FROM THE AIR, UNTIL THE KID DONS A SIMILAR SET OF WINGS TO BRING HIM TO JUSTICE. BOTH SET OF WINGS WERE BURNED AT THE TALES CONCLUSION, LEAVING UNFINISHED WORK FOR WILBUR AND ORVILLE WRIGHT.



HURRICANE

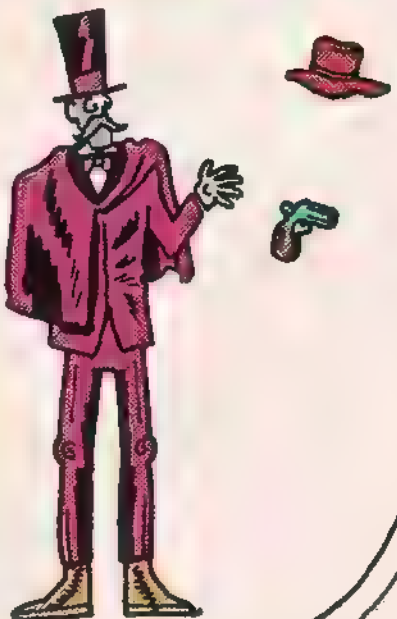
E PHANTOM

DOCTOR DANGER and the ...

INVISIBLE GUNMAN

TWO-GUN KID SOON REALIZED WAS JUST A FAKE (#68, MAR 1964). S COSTUME WITH HICH GLOWED IN THE DARK, ERSIDE OF HIS BLACK CAPE ED TO VANISH. SMART GUY.

KID COLT WENT UP AGAINST SOMEONE EVEN TRICKIER (#116, MAY 1964). EVENTUALLY IT DAWNED ON HIM THAT THIS DR. DANGER WAS JUST A VENTRILOQUIST WITH A MAGNET THAT MANIPULATED THE NON-EXISTENT "INVISIBLE GUNMAN'S" SIX-SHOOTER (IT WAS THE DOCTOR HIMSELF WHO FIRED FROM BENEATH HIS CLOAK IN THE "GUNMAN'S" STEAD). (THEY NEVER DID EXPLAIN THAT FLOATING HAT THOUGH...)



SHORTLY THEREAFTER, STAN SENT MARVEL'S KIDS BACK TO DOING WHAT THEY DID BEST -- STOPPING STAGECOACH HOLDUPS, GOING AFTER CATTLE RUSTLERS, AND SHOOTING THE GUNS OUT OF THEIR ENEMIES HANDS AT A HUNDRED FEET.

THE SIX-GUN SUPER VILLAINS WERE UNCEREMONIOUSLY LAID TO REST WITH ONLY ONE QUESTION LEFT UNANSWERED: WHERE DID THEY GET THOSE OUTFITS??

BASED ON THE EVIDENCE PRESENTED, I WOULD GUESS THAT, IN THE TAILOR SHOPS OF THE OLD WEST, PURPLE REIGNED....

FRED HEMBECK

MARVEL SUPER HEROES™ SUMMER FUN

A PREVIEW OF 1985's ANNUALS

by **Ken Hart**

This article is being written near the end of February, a time generally associated with freezing temperatures and biting winds. (So what if New York just had a record high of 75 degrees?) But the sweat and stickiness of summer will be on us before we realize it, making this the perfect time to look ahead at Marvel's exciting annuals.

Judging from comments by the various editors and writers, 1985's group of giant-sized adventures will, for the most part, be tightly interwoven with the regular titles, and with each other as well.

Coming in July, for example, is the **AVENGERS ANNUAL**, scripted by **Roger Stern** and co-plotted with **John Byrne**, who is also supplying pencil breakdowns for the tale. It's followed almost immediately by the **FANTASTIC FOUR ANNUAL**, written and drawn by **John** and inked by **Joe Sinnott**. According to **Mark Gruenwald**, editor of the **AVENGERS ANNUAL**, the two books cross over and feature both super-teams against the remnants of the mighty **Skrull Empire. The Avengers** will enter deep space in their monthly series, taking us into the annual. As you may remember, the fate of **the Skrulls** has been uncertain ever since **Galactus** ate their homeworld in the pages of **THE FANTASTIC FOUR. Mark** says that, as a result, the governors of each of the **Skrull**-occupied planets has declared himself to be the new emperor. This, of course, leads to civil war among the various **Skrull** factions. One of the groups, which is encountered by **the Avengers**, hasn't been seen in many years, according to **John Byrne**, but its reappearance should certainly delight long-time **FF** fans.

The **FANTASTIC FOUR ANNUAL**'s part of the crossover will feature another **FF** foe not seen in over 20 years. **John** says he has developed a "fairly decent way of bringing him back that doesn't seem too contrived." (Come on, archivists! Make a guess!) The plotlines of the two annuals will converge near their conclusions, so both books will actually feature the same ending, but reached from two different directions.

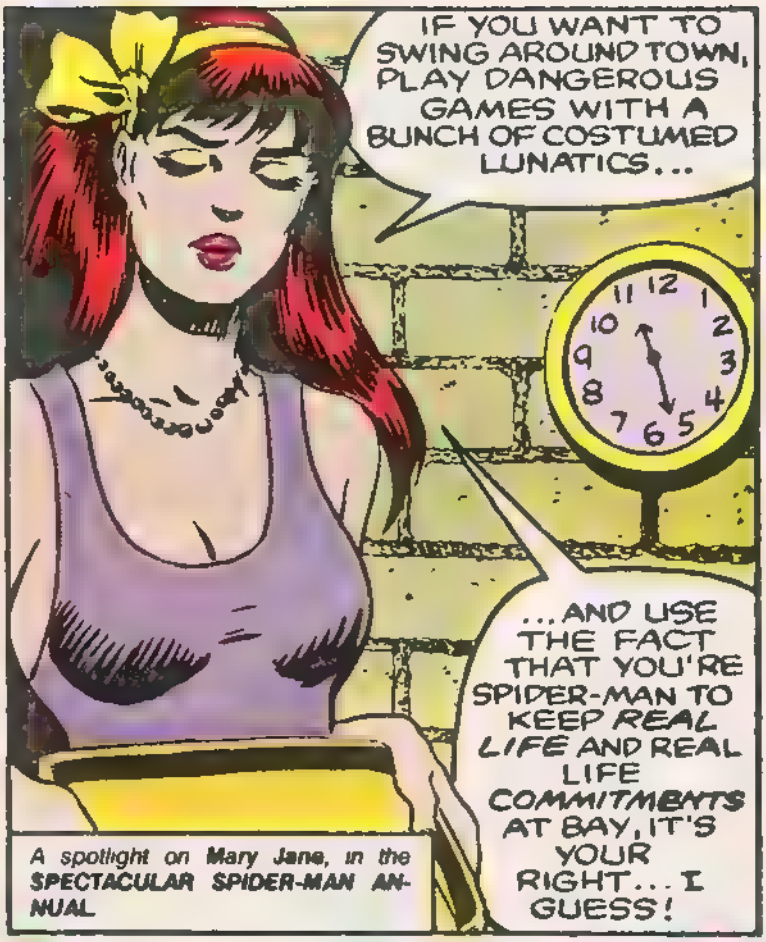
Mark adds ominously that the two annuals will depict "the final resolution not only of **the Skrull Empire**, but of **the Skrull** menace."

The other epic story this summer will stretch across four issues. It begins with the two-part **X-MEN / ALPHA FLIGHT** team-up, written by **Chris Claremont**, with art by **Paul Smith** and **Bob Wiacek**, and it continues into **THE NEW MUTANTS SPECIAL** (by **Chris** and **Art Adams**) and the **X-MEN**

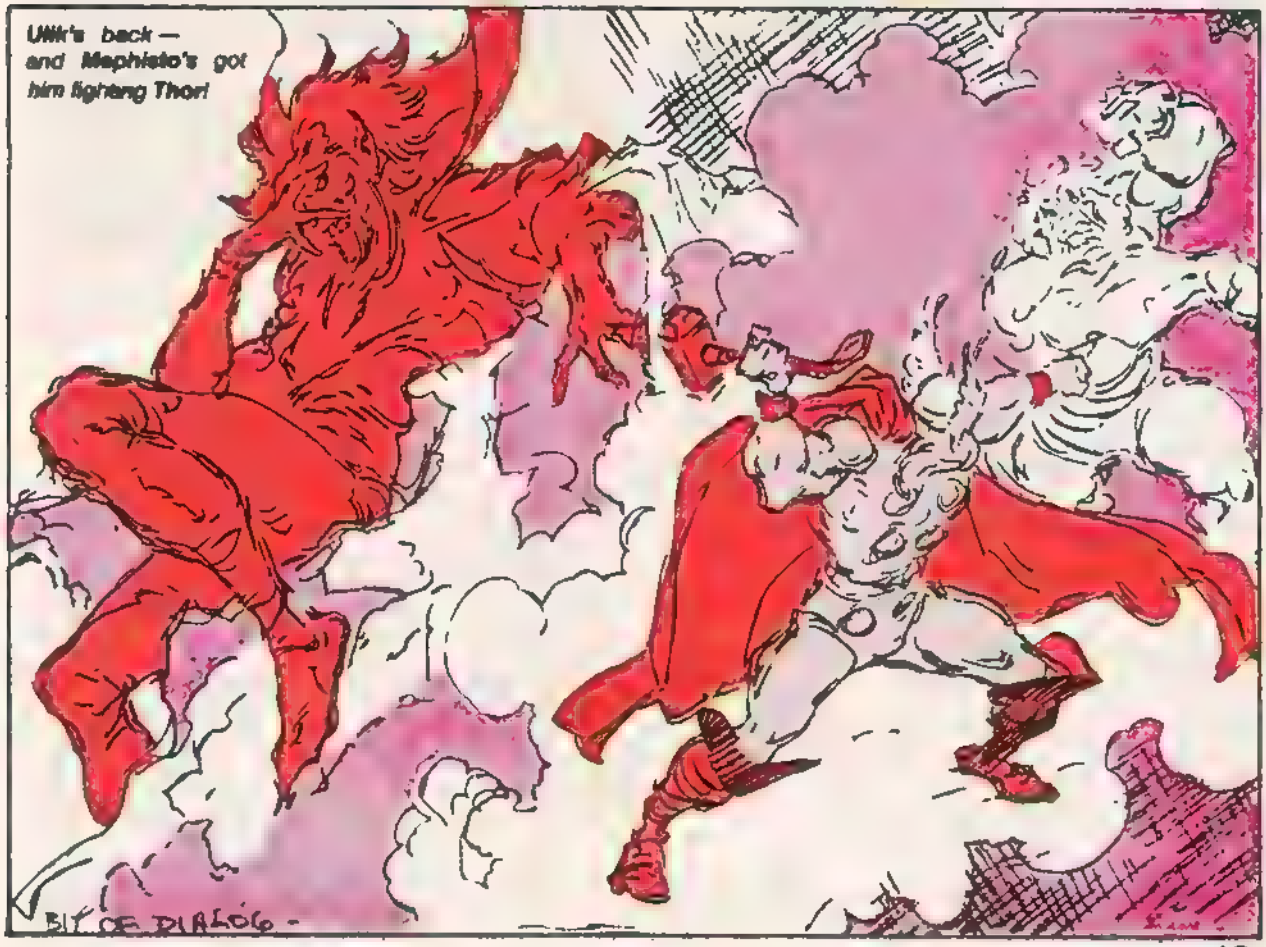
ANNUAL (again by **Chris** and **Art**, with **Terry Austin** as inker). In the first part of the saga, **the X-Men** (including **Scott** and **Madeleine Summers**) and **Alpha Flight** wind up "getting involved in a big scam of **Loki's**," according to editor **Ann Nocenti**. Loki *says* he plans to create a paradise, but his intentions are far from pleasant.

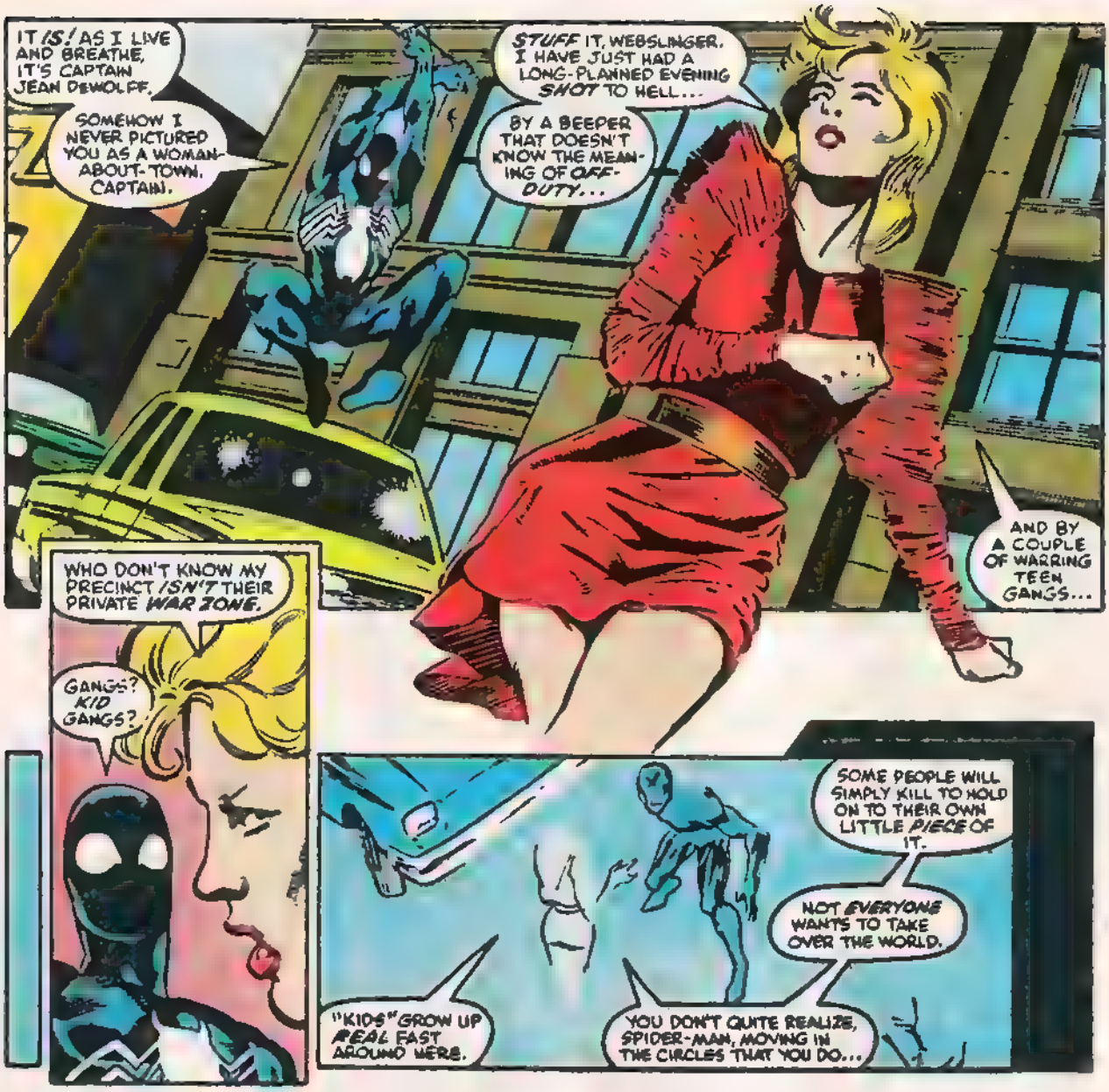
The story introduces a brand new super-team called **the Berserkers**, four people of professional backgrounds, (for instance, one member is a geologist and another is an architect) who recieve strange powers. Things get bizarre when one of the recipients of power is **Madeleine**.

Loki's plan is defeated, but the God of Evil is so furious that he vows revenge upon **the X-Men**. This brings us to the **NEW MUTANTS SPECIAL**. Why **the New Mutants**? Good question. It seems that **Loki** enlists the aid of **the Enchantress** to do his dirty work. She locates the mansion, but she mistakes **the New Mutants** for **the X-Men** and inflicts upon them the punishment she had planned for the other team. **The New Mutants** are then scattered throughout the lands of Asgard. For example, **Amara** is transported to a fairyland, **Dani** joins **the Valkyries**, and **Sam** confronts **the Trolls**. The issue is being called a Special, as opposed to an Annual, be-


IF YOU WANT TO SWING AROUND TOWN, PLAY DANGEROUS GAMES WITH A BUNCH OF COSTUMED LUNATICS...
...AND USE THE FACT THAT YOU'RE SPIDER-MAN TO KEEP *REAL LIFE* AND REAL LIFE *COMMITMENTS* AT BAY, IT'S YOUR RIGHT... I GUESS!

A spotlight on **Mary Jane**, *in the* ***SPECTACULAR SPIDER-MAN ANNUAL***




IT IS! AS I LIVE AND BREATHE, IT'S CAPTAIN JEAN DEWOLFF.
SOMEHOW I NEVER PICTURED YOU AS A WOMAN-ABOUT-TOWN, CAPTAIN.
STUFF IT, WEBSLINGER. I HAVE JUST HAD A LONG-PLANNED EVENING SHOT TO HELL...
BY A BEEPER THAT DOESN'T KNOW THE MEANING OF OFF-DUTY...
AND BY A COUPLE OF WARRING TEEN GANGS...
WHO DON'T KNOW MY PRECINCT ISN'T THEIR PRIVATE WAR ZONE.
GANGS? KID GANGS?
SOME PEOPLE WILL SIMPLY KILL TO HOLD ON TO THEIR OWN LITTLE PIECE OF IT.
NOT EVERYONE WANTS TO TAKE OVER THE WORLD.
"KIDS" GROW UP REAL FAST AROUND HERE.
YOU DON'T QUITE REALIZE, SPIDER-MAN, MOVING IN THE CIRCLES THAT YOU DO...

cause it will be much larger (64 pages on Baxter paper) and will contain no ads.

The next logical step occurs in the **X-MEN ANNUAL**, in which **the X-Men** set out to rescue **the New Mutants.** Asgardians galore will be featured throughout the stories.

1985's three **Spider-Man** annuals are being edited by **Jim Owsley**, who says the first to hit the stands will be **WEB OF SPIDER-MAN ANNUAL #1.** Entitled "Future Max," it's written by **Ann Nocenti** and drawn by **Tony Salmons.** The story focuses on an extremely shy kid. **Jim** says the issue "looks great."

Remember the robotic **Spider-Slayers**? Well, they return in "Ghosts," the **AMAZING SPIDER-MAN ANNUAL**, by **Louise Simonson** and **Mary Wilshire. Jim** describes it as a slightly tongue-in-cheek story in which a somewhat odd man gains possession of the **Spider-Slayers** and then becomes convinced that **Spider-Man** is actually none other than . . . **Mary Jane Watson?** He visits **the Kingpin** carrying charts and blueprints that detail how a beautiful woman could wear a suit that approximates the build of a man. **The Kingpin**, of course, tells him to get lost. Undeterred, the man plans to prove his theory by capturing the elusive **Mary Jane.** This, naturally, puts her in a very bad predicament. As **Jim** describes it, "she has to save herself from this maniac, and at the same time protect **Peter Parker's** secret identity." She can't stop to ask **Peter** for help, because that would risk revealing the true **Spidey.**

The **SPECTACULAR SPIDER-MAN ANNUAL**, by **Peter David, Mark Beachum** and **Joe Rubinstein**, features the gripping story of "Ace." Two rival gangs are ready to tear each other apart — and the charismatic **Ace**, who could stop the hostilities with a word, refuses to involve himself. **Spider-Man** must teach him that "with great power comes great responsibility" if lives are to be saved.

John Buscema fans, take note! He'll be penciling *and* inking this year's **THOR ANNUAL**, written by **Alan Zelenetz** and edited by **Ralph**

Macchio. Thor faces an adversary which **John** and **Stan Lee** created years ago: **Mephisto. Ralph** says he feels that the annuals should depict important events in the characters' lives, so he's determined that **Mephisto** be shown as the ultimate embodiment of all things evil, which he truly is. "We really wanted to restore some of his stature," says **Ralph**, adding that **Mephisto** is far more powerful than has previously been indicated. The story will focus on the nature of evil itself.

Ulik the Troll also reappears in what promises to be a thrilling tale, scheduled for release in September.

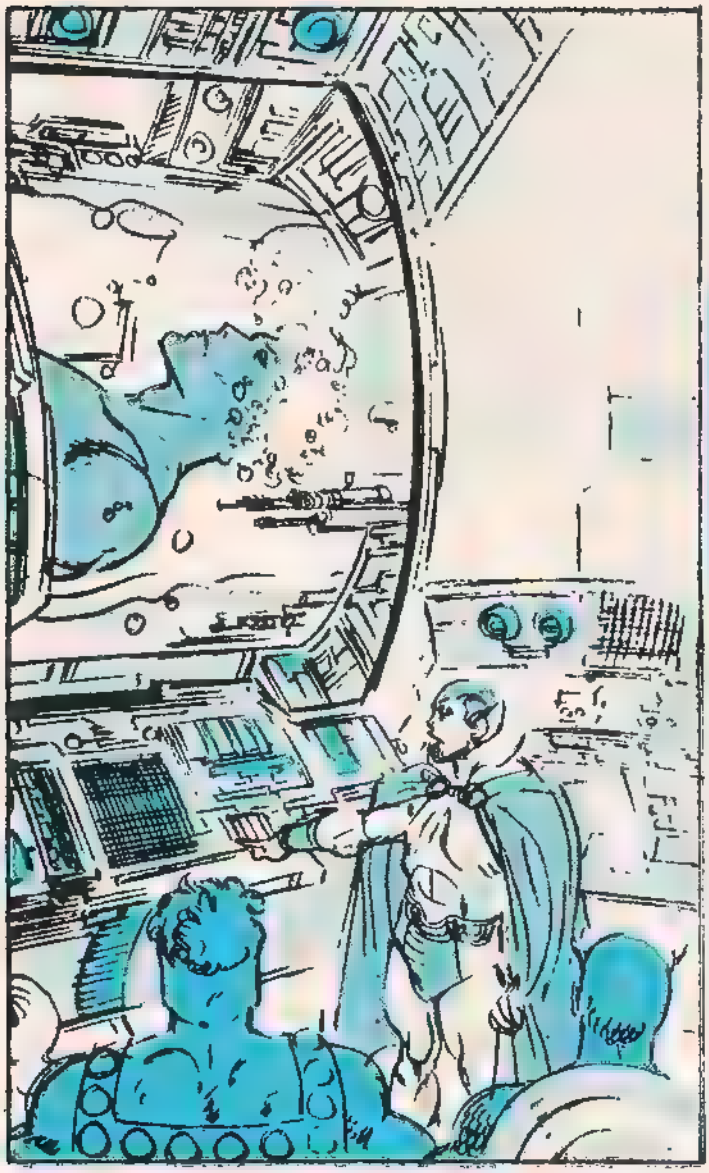
John Byrne will be writing this year's **HULK ANNUAL**, with art by the excellent **Sal Buscema. John** examines in the story the different effects of gamma radiation on different kinds of people. A scientist arranges the capture of the brutish **Hulk** to further explore this subject. **John** says that the issue does have a punchline, so he's reluctant to reveal too many details.

1985's **CONAN ANNUAL**, by **Jim Owsley** and **Ernie Chan**, describes an adventure of **Conan** in his mid-twenties, when he was still in the service of **King Yildiz of Turan. Conan's** troops are sent to reclaim a castle from a baron who hasn't been making his payments to the king, but when they arrive, says **Jim**, they discover that "something has gone terribly wrong." Some evil force has taken control of both the castle and the baron.

Jim is now the regular writer on the **CONAN THE BARBARIAN** monthly series as well, and he says there's a slight tie-in between issue #175 and the Annual. In the former, one of the characters, **Redondo**, reminds **Conan** of the "good old days" when they were in the king's service. The Annual shows exactly what he meant!

Set for an August release is the **ROM ANNUAL**, written, drawn, and edited by **Bill Mantlo, Steve Ditko,** and **Mike Carlin,** respectively, but that issue's plot is still in the works at this time.

Well, that's it! Ten annuals and several other special packages should make the summer of 1985 one of the most enjoyable in recent years. So take a hint: stay indoors and read! It'll be too *hot* to do anything else!



***The Avengers** meet the **FF**, and the **Skrulls**, courtesy of **Stern** and **Byrne**.*

the Eternals

by **Bill Stavicoek**

Get ready for an adventure of epic proportions, for a story whose scope and grandeur harkens back to the earliest days of the Marvel Universe. Be prepared to meet the two offshoot races of man, to ponder the plan of the awesome space gods. Get ready to explore the purpose of life itself! And all this is only a small part of the **ETERNALS 12-issue Limited Series,** coming this summer!

The Eternals are one of the evolutionary offshoots of humanity fashioned by the mysterious extra-terrestrial **Celestials.** They possess greater powers and longer lifespans than their normal human cousins and are in constant conflict with the second race, **the Deviants.** These amazing and unique characters were first introduced in a series created by the legendary **Jack Kirby** and now a new team will be picking up where he left off.

Editor **Ralph Macchio** has teamed writer **Peter Gillis** and artist **Sal Buscema** to further chronicle the story of these unique beings. They are bringing to the series a freshness and deeper characterization while remaining true to the original concept.

"Largely, in terms of the story, **Jack Kirby** laid a fantastic groundwork but left an enormous number of questions unanswered," said **Peter.** "We're going to try to answer those questions in an interesting way."

Part of that will be to show that the war between the two offshoots is not really over. "The battle between them is, in a sense, eternal," explained **Ralph.** "There is an underlying reason why the **Celestials** created two alternate races of man, not only here on Earth, but on many other worlds, as you'll see in the series. One of the things that **Peter** wants to go into is why they would create **Deviants,** what

would be the reason to create a species so attuned towards chaos."

More than that, **Peter** will ask why there are three branches of humanity. Why did the **Celestials** fashion **Eternals, Deviants,** *and* humankind? "What we're going to be exploring is the purpose of life on Earth," said **Peter.**

The entire concept and direction the series is taking has the whole creative team excited. "It is one of the favorite things that I am currently working on, **Ralph** is very enthusiastic, and **Sal** is doing some fantastic work," said **Peter.**

The big conflict, of course, involves the **Deviants.** As this conflict unfolds, the series will delve into **Deviant** society and show us a lot more about these beings who seem so different from their **Eternal** cousins.

"The **Deviants** will be making a major thrust to change the balance of power on Earth," explained **Peter.** "They may even try to ultimately defy what they consider to be the plan of the space gods for Earth and humanity. The **Eternals** see this as a danger and they are going to try and stop them."

And what of the space gods? What of the mysterious **Celestials**? "The **Celestials** will cast a very long shadow in this book, even though they may or may not appear in the series," said **Peter.**

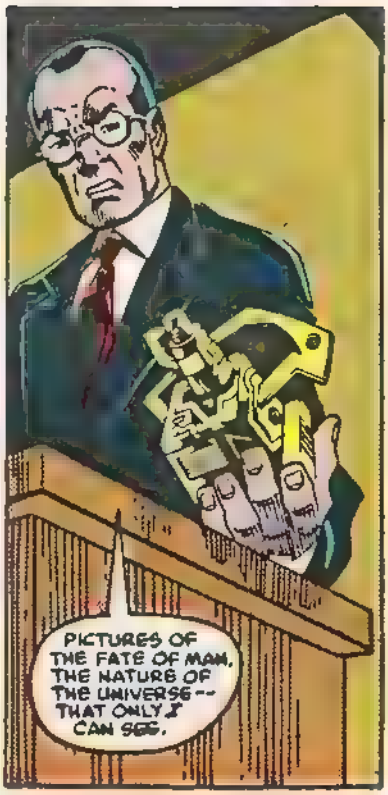
Another major plot segment will involve the young (by **Eternal** standards) **Thena,** daughter of the now deceased **Eternal** ruler, **Zuras.** With his death and the exodus of many of the **Eternals** from Earth, "**Thena** assumes rulership and must immediately deal with a number of things," explained **Peter.** "Now, with most of their fellows out among the stars, the remaining **Eternals** must confront life in a slightly more barren world. They all have reasons why they have stayed on Earth and some of those reasons will prove to be very interesting."

Thena, especially, will have trouble coming to grips with the death of her father. "**Eternals** have a great deal of difficulty dealing with death since they don't die and they don't expect to," said **Peter.** "Into this will come the **Deviant, Kro,** who shares a bond with **Thena.** This is problematic because she thinks he's scum of the earth, and he is. But we'll be bringing in some characters who will make **Kro** look like **Captain America.**"

But the old characters won't lose out to the new ones. "We will find out some of the characters' origins, such as **Ikaris,** and those that are now dead, such as **Zuras,** will serve to motivate the living characters. We'll be learning more about each of the characters as we delve into their personas a little more," explained **Ralph.**

One new character that has **Ralph** and **Peter** excited isn't a hero at all. "We will be introducing a new character called **Ghaur** who will be a master villain of the series," said **Ralph.** "Through him we'll discover what it is runs the **Deviants.**"

To live up to the standards set in the original **Kirby** series, **Peter** and **Sal** are pulling out all the stops. "There's going to be a real sense of scope in the series," said **Peter.** "**Sal** is opening up and doing all these wonderful **Kirby**-esque visuals that I think will really knock people senseless. We're also trying to give a sense of majesty and mystery to these **Eternals.** We want to make them characters that you can identify with, but at the same time, the **Eternals** are immortals and that means they're not just your average everyday guys and gals. There's a lot to them, a lot of history behind them. That offers me a chance to make them memorable and even larger than super-heroic life."



With such a rich and mythological concept, the art will play an important part in making everything come alive. **Sal Buscema** was **Ralph's** first and only choice to handle the assignment. "**Sal** is going to surprise a lot of people on this series," said **Ralph.** "He has always been known as a good Marvel artist. But here I think he has done and

THE CELESTIALS FOSTERED US ALL, BUT DID MANKIND TAKE TO ITS KINFOLK--
--THE ETERNALS, EVEN THOUGH WE WERE TRUSTWORTHY, HELPFUL, THRIFTY, BRAVE, INDESTRUCTIBLE AND IMMORTAL? NO SIR!
NOR WERE YOU ENTHUSIASTIC ABOUT THE DEVIANTS--
--THOUGH THAT'S MORE UNDERSTANDABLE. AFTER ALL, THOSE GENETICALLY UNSTABLE HOOLIGANS DID OPPRESS YOUR RACE IN THE PAST FROM TIME TO TIME--

is doing his best work in many, many years."

Sal is doing full pencils and is really enjoying his work on the series. "They're wonderful characters and I'm enjoying myself thoroughly," said **Sal**. "**Ralph** sent me the entire **Kirby** series and I looked it over before I started doing any of the art. Being that they are **Kirby** creations, I am deliberately trying to keep that kind of flavor to the book. I'm not so much following his style as I am trying to maintain the feeling **Kirby** gave the series. I've been influenced by his work and in the new series I'll be trying to instill the scope that **Kirby** is so famous for."

"I think **Sal** is doing the best work of his career on these books," said **Peter**. "It's absolutely stunning. **Walt Simonson** is doing the covers and he was as blown away as the rest of us when he saw the pencils for issue number one!"

"**Sal** is, in certain ways, the heir to the **Kirby** throne in the way he conceptualizes Marvel characters," said **Ralph**. "He's doing it on a cosmic scale in **THE ETERNALS**, in the **Kirby** tradition. You'll see lots of large double spreads, and high tech art. It will have a **Kirby** feel, but will be totally **Sal**."

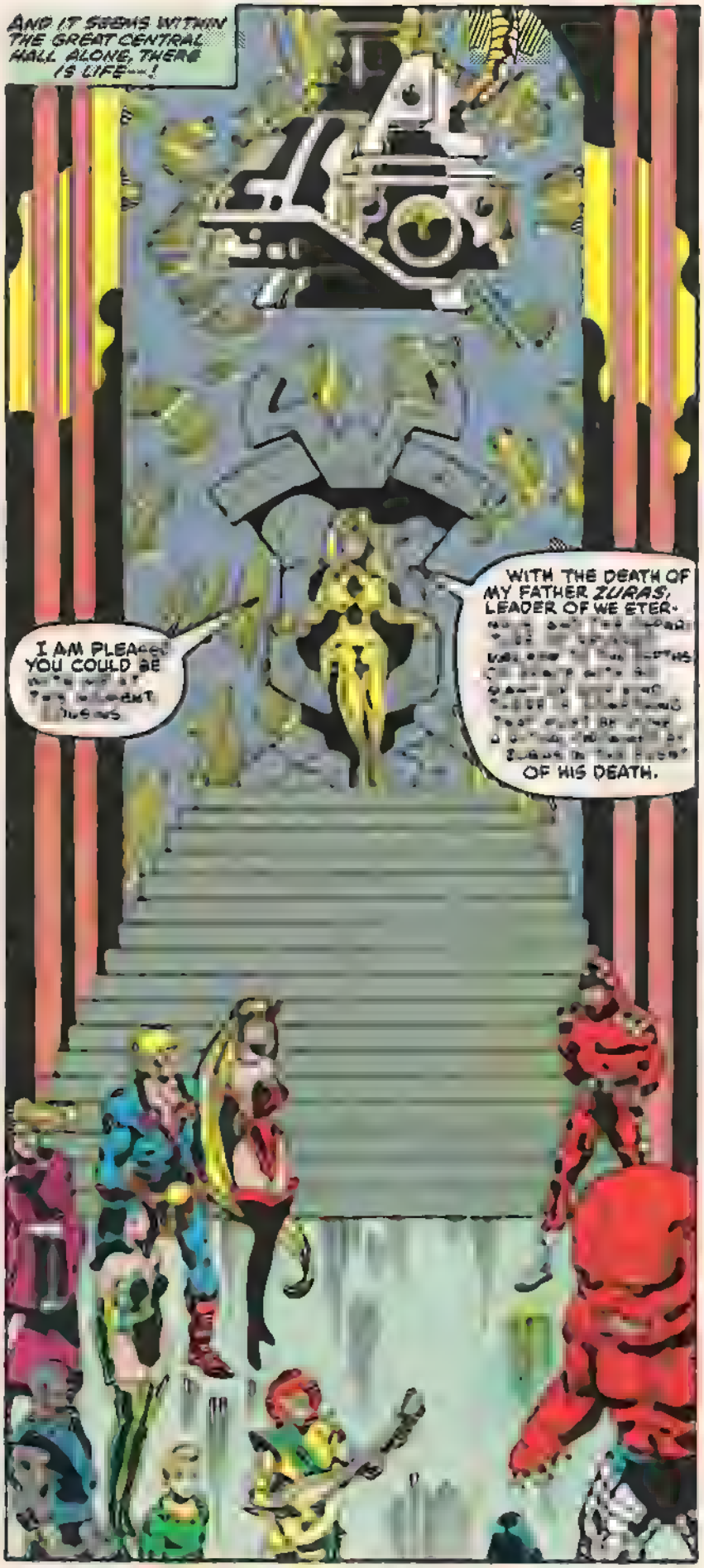
Sal is honored by the very pleasant reactions he's getting from his peers about this book. "These characters have a certain bizarre quality that the books will also have," he explained. "I think initially, the idea was a tremendous one. **Kirby's** creation was just tremendously imaginative. What we're trying to do now is expand a little more on the characterization and I'll have a lot to do with that as the artist. It's been a lot of fun and that has a way of pulling the very best out of a person."

And that best is what the entire creative team is giving to the series. It promises to be larger than life and spectacular, but the story will have its human moments as well. There will even be a touch of humor. "In issue number one we have [illegible] wrestlers and in number three there will be teenage mutant ninja vampires," said **Peter** with a mischievous grin.

"This is the story I came to Marvel to do," explained **Peter**. "This is the distillation of what makes Marvel head and shoulders above all the other companies, this sense of cosmic scope and excitement."

"We want to establish **the Eternals** as stars in their own right," said **Peter**. "They certainly have the potential. We want to carve out our own niche and really do some great stuff with the concept we inherited."

The story of **the Eternals** is the story of the universe, life itself, and more! Get ready to watch a new mythology grow before your very eyes!


AND IT SEEMS WITHIN THE GREAT CENTRAL HALL ALONE, THERE IS LIFE--!
I AM PLEASED YOU COULD BE [illegible]
WITH THE DEATH OF MY FATHER ZURAS, LEADER OF WE ETER- [illegible] OF HIS DEATH.

THE MARVEL AGE — 1968 (Part III)

The X-MEN FEATURING:
THE DEATH OF PROFESSOR X
MARVEL COMICS GROUP
12¢
NOT A HOAX! NOT A DREAM! NOT AN IMAGINARY TALE! THIS IS FOR REAL!

by **Adam Philips**

In our last two chapters, we took a good look at the Marvel Comics of 1968, from **THE AVENGERS** to **S.H.I.E.L.D.**, with stops along the way to look into the lives of such celebrities as **Daredevil, the Fantastic Four, Spider-Man, Captain America** and many more. This time we'll take a peek at the new titles that spun off of **TALES OF SUSPENSE** and **TALES TO ASTONISH**, as well as a couple of long-time Marvel favorites — **THE MIGHTY THOR** and **THE UNCANNY X-MEN**. Let's pick up where we left off last time . . .

In **TALES OF SUSPENSE, Captain America** was busy with the troubles his newly revealed secret identity had caused, when he was summoned by the **Black Panther**, who had discovered an orbiting satellite with a deadly ray that put all of Earth in danger! The evil group running the satellite was led by none other than — **Baron Zemo**?! He turned out to be an imposter, but his lackeys didn't know that, and neither did **Cap**, the **Black Panther** or **Irma Kruhl**, the world's deadliest woman (really **S.H.I.E.L.D.** agent **Sharon Carter** in disguise). After putting the fake **Zemo** out of business, **Cap** and **Sharon** ran up against the **Red Skull's** fourth and most dangerous **Sleeper**. They managed to destroy the deadly robot, but after assaulting the **Skull's** fortress **Cap** became his slave (through the menace of atomic tape)! It took all of **Cap's** cunning and battle experience to defeat the **Skull** and his **Exiles** while keeping them from detonating the tape! He certainly deserved a break after that, but the menaces still came fast and furious! **Cap** soon had to race against the clock to disarm the incredible Seismo-bomb before it was stolen by **Batroc, the Swordsman** and **the Living Laser**, had a quick run-in with an enemy nation's L.M.D. duplicate of himself, met the man known as **Doctor Faustus**, whose weapon was the mind, and kept the **Red Skull's** hireling, **the Trapster**, from sabotaging **Project Fireball**! A tough year, to be sure!

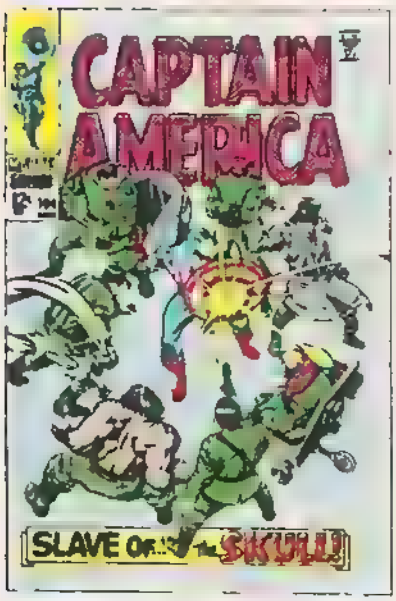
The invincible **Iron Man** spent much of 1968 trying to keep people from infringing on his patented armor. After escaping the **Maggia** and beating **Whiplash** he had to contend with **A.I.M.**, who tried to duplicate his amazing armor for their own agents! While their armor had the same strength as **Tony's**, his years of battle experience gave him a big advantage! **I.M.** then met the robotic **Demolisher**, who had been created by **Drexel Cord**, one of **Tony Stark's** biggest competitors, to be an agressive counterpart to **Stark Industries' Iron Man**. He managed to dismantle the **Demolisher**, but the battle had a high price — **Drexel Cord's** life! **Cord's** beautiful daughter, **Janice**, was soon to become a romantic interest for **Tony**, despite the fact that she blamed her father's death on **Tony's** business competition. The battle with the **Demolisher** caused the **Iron Man** armor to fail, and **Tony** realized there were still a few bugs to be ironed out. **Happy Hogan** had to save **Tony's** life by building a new suit of **Iron Man** armor while **Tony** lay helpless. The new armor enabled **Tony** to regain his mobility, but an explosion of a Cobalt Bombardment machine changed **Happy** into the monstrous **Freak** for the second time! After curing **Happy**, **Iron Man** tested his new armor against such menaces as the new **Unicorn**, Cerebrus (a deadly computer **Tony's** future self built), and the vengance crazed **Crusher**! The year wrapped up with a titanic two parter in which **Iron Man** faced the **Maggia**, who had hired the **Gladiator** to slice the **Golden Avenger** to pieces while **Whitney Frost** (later to become **Madame Masque**) and a horde of **Maggia** thugs stormed **Tony's** factory!

Note: We couldn't let the year pass without a mention of **IRON MAN AND THE SUB-MARINER**, the most limited series of all time! When **Captain America** and **the Hulk** got their own magazines, the Armored Avenger and **Prince Namor** shared a series for the space of *one issue* before getting their own full-length magazines.

1968 was also the year the incredible **Hulk** proved once again that he'd fight anybody, anywhere, anyhow! He warmed up on the savage **Sub-Mariner**, and moved up to tackling the legions of **Asgard** — even **Odin!** (Actually these two battles were set up by **the Puppet Master** and **Loki**, respectively. What a couple of fight promoters they'd make, eh?) Never content to rest on his laurels, **the Hulk** soon pounded on the **Parasite**, an alien warlord, and the **Missing Link**, a primitive human who had been frozen for thousands of years and was released by an atomic blast.

He travelled to the Orient to face the **Mandarin** and a Chinese version of **S.H.I.E.L.D.**, to the Great Refuge to take on the **Inhumans** (both good and bad), and to the Savage Land, where he knocked **Umbu the Unliving** for a loop! If you think a belligerent guy like **the Hulk** had no friends in 1968 — you're almost right, though he did manage to spend some real quality time with **Rick Jones, Nick Fury, Ka-Zar** and even **Zabu**!

1968 was the year of **Destiny** for the savage **Sub-Mariner**. We mean, of course, **Paul Destine**, an adventurer who found the Helmet of Destiny (really the Serpent Crown of Lemuria) which gave him great powers and drove him mad. As **Destiny**, he tried to conquer the world, and gave the Prince of Atlantis a run for his undersea money! **Namor** thought **Destiny** defeated, and went off to tangle with



the **Plantmen** (with some help from **Triton** of the **Inhumans**), and seek his people, who had disappeared from Atlantis. Finding them involved locking horns with that undersea barbarian, **Attuma**. **Namor** was then introduced to one of his most colorful villains — **Todd Arliss**, otherwise known as **Tiger Shark**. **Arliss**, a former Olympic swimmer who had been injured and could no longer swim, was endowed with the powers of a shark (combined with some of **Namor's**) by the evil **Doctor Dorcas**! Over the course of **Namor's battle with Tiger Shark**, who should show up but **Destiny**! He was not only hale and hearty — he was running for president! That's right, although he was killed over the course of this story. Even after he died, **Destiny** was still a problem for the prince of the deep. **Namor** clashed with **the Thing**, who was taking the Helmet of Destiny to a laboratory for study (in a story re-introducing **Betty Dean, Namor's** WWII-era girlfriend). **Namor** realized that the Helmet's influence was so strong it had to be disposed of, and permanently. Unfortunately, **the Thing** wouldn't give it up without a fight, and it took a lot of effort for **Namor** to secure the Helmet and bring it to Atlantis.

Thor spent 1968 proving that a god's life is never easy! First he had to stop **the Wrecker**, and to make matters worse, **Thor** had lost half his powers! As if that weren't enough, **Loki** was waiting on the sidelines to strike! While **Hela**, goddess of death, tried to decide whether or not to claim **Thor's** soul, **Sif** took off to seek help from **Karnilla**, the Norn Queen, who said that **Sif** had to beat **the Wrecker** by inhabiting the form of **the Destroyer**! When **Thor** recovered and saw the mute **Destroyer** alive, he attacked — not realizing that this was, in fact, his beloved **Sif**! In the heat of battle **Odin** granted **Thor** his full power again, and **Sif's** soul returned to her body. **Thor** then joined **Balder** and **Sif** in **Karnilla's** realm, where they had been busy trying to stave off a troll invasion of Asgard, led by **Ulik**! After stopping **Ulik**, **Thor** noticed that **Loki** had somehow made off with **Mjolnir**, and the irate **Thunder God** took off to make his half-brother give it back! While they fought, **Ulik** stumbled across the prison of **Mangog**, which led into one of the greatest **Thor** stories of all time. **Ulik** released **Mangog**, who was determined to have his vengeance by drawing the Odinsword, thus causing Ragnarok — the end of the Universe — to occur! After some of the most spectacular battle scenes ever drawn, the **Asgardians** managed to halt the threat of **Mangog**. But **Stan** and **Jack** were never content to rest on their laurels. They followed up this classic with another one, in which **Thor** learned the truth about his secret identity. It was believed up till that time that **Don Blake** had been given the powers of **Thor** — this story revealed the truth. that **Blake** was an invented personality designed to teach **Thor** humility by making him dwell among the mortals, without his powers.

The X-Men's years was full of repercussions from a shocking tragedy. the apparent death of **Professor X**. After defeating **Factor Three** and meeting the newly defrosted **Frankenstein Monster**, they met **Grotesk**, prince of a race of underground dwellers whose civilization had been destroyed by an atomic test. The story ended with **Professor X's** death, and it was a couple of years before we learned that he had in fact gone undercover to prepare a defense against an almost unbeatable menace. **Magneto**, the master of magnetism, picked this time of grieving to attack the mutants, and with the help of **Quicksilver, the Scarlet Witch**, and **the Toad**, captured the team. Luckily, **the Angel** managed to escape, and flew off to get help from the mighty **Avengers**. After the story ended (in **AVENGERS** #53) the young team was attacked by the mind-bending **Juggernaut**, who had briefly escaped the Crimson Cosmos. He was determined to destroy the team, even if he'd missed the opportunity to kill his half-brother, **Professor X**. **The X-Men** managed to hold him off until he disappeared back into his prison, but FBI Agent **Fred Duncan** showed up to succeed where **the Juggernaut** had failed. He had a court order that the team disband! In the interim **the Beast** and **Iceman** met a dangerous kook called **the Mahe Yogi**, and **Cyclops** and **Marvel**

Girl learned the mystery of **Computo** (really **Quasimodo** in disguise) whose multi-talented robots were wreaking havoc on the area. Then a threat big enough to reunite the team appeared — the menace of **Mesmero, Magneto** and a new mutant, **Lorna Dane**, who was **Bobby (Iceman) Drake's** girlfriend! At the end of the year, **Magneto** was claiming that **Lorna** was his daughter, but all was not as it seemed, even for the number one evil mutant himself!

Next: The winsome **Wasp** gets married! **Captain America** introduces the **Falcon**! **Captain Marvel** gets a new costume! The **FF** gets captured by **Doc Doom**! **Iron Man** meets the **Controller**! **Thor** has deep philosophical discussions with **Galactus**! And the **X-Men** meet **Neal Adams**! It all happens in the event-filled year we just had to call — 1969!!

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The newest superstar in the MARVEL firmament!
A six-issue limited series, written by Ann Nocenti, and introducing the unparalleled talent of Arthur Adams.
BEGINNING IN MAY.
MARVEL

THRILLS! CHILLS! TERROR SO REAL YOU'LL SCREAM! IT'S . . .

REVENGE OF THE LIVING MONOLITH

by **Bill Slavicsek**

You probably remember **the Living Monolith**. "Big, tall guy. Egyptian. Real mean." That's how editor **Jim Owsley** describes the strange protagonist of Marvel's upcoming Graphic Novel, **THE REVENGE OF THE LIVING MONOLITH**.

The Living Monolith is actually the Egyptian archaeologist **Ahmet Abdol**, who started his villainous career in **THE X-MEN**, as **the Living Pharoah**. For many years **Abdol** has shared a strange link with **Alex Summers**, brother of **Scott Summers**, who also goes by the name **Cyclops**. This brought him into conflict after conflict with **the X-Men**. But **the X-Men** will have little to do with the new story.

"Basically the story is '**The Thing That Ate Manhattan**'," said **Owsley**, who is editing the Graphic Novel. "It's in the tradition of the old Saturday matinees that everyone went to in order to be scared to death. **The Monolith** is a likely candidate for this type of story because he's big and he's crazy."

The approach that **Owsley** and his creative team of writer **David Michelinie** and artist **Marc Silvestri** are taking is a very human one. "We're getting into **the Monolith's** head, into what makes him what he is," said **Owsley**. "He's obsessed with power and we're going to explore that facet of the character."

Michelinie echoes those ideas. "I'm approaching the character from the human angle of **Ahmet Abdol**. He has a drive to be powerful, but that's never really been explored. We'll deal with his past and what drives him to need to prove himself the way he does."

And how does a 30 foot plus — and growing — **Monolith** prove himself? "He decides to demonstrate his power to the world by demolishing Manhattan," explained **Owsley**.

Trying to stop the crazed and very angry **Monolith** are **Captain America**, **Spider-Man** and **the She-Hulk**. "The bulk of the story takes place in 10 minutes and they happen to be the ones on the spot," said **Owsley**. "By the time other heroes realize what's happening, it's all over — for better or for worse."

"Each of the heroes must face something within themselves," said **Michelinie**. "There are a lot of inner confrontations going on around the obvious conflict."

Owsley came up with the basic concept for the story and **Michelinie** took it from there. "I called **Dave** and said, 'Let's do one of those black and white B-movie type stories about the giant that crunches the city. You know, the ones that scared us silly when we were kids. But let's do it with a difference. Let's do it as though it were really happening.' Well, **Dave** told me that he didn't draw very well, so I decided to let him write it."

The overtone of the story is fear and real panic. "Picture yourself at home, watching TV. You look out your window and you see this guy's foot coming down the street. **The Monolith** is marching through Manhattan and he's taking out a lot of real estate. It's absolute hysteria," said **Owsley**.

With **Marc Silvestri**, best known for his work on **CONAN THE KING**, handling the art, readers are guaranteed a fresh approach to the super hero medium. "He's a hot artist and his work is dramatic and very dynamic," said **Owsley**.

"This is going to be one great Graphic Novel," said **Owsley**. "The art is going to be out of this world and **Dave's** story is an intelligently done '**Thing That Ate New York**' story. We're doing some heavy-duty ground breaking work with the character of **the Living Monolith**."

"It will explain the ultimate fate of **Ahmet Abdol**," said **Michelinie**, "but that's a surprise."

It's going to be a surprise worth waiting for. Look for **THE REVENGE OF THE LIVING MONOLITH**, coming this summer. Just keep telling yourself, "It's only a Graphic Novel. It's *only* a Graphic Novel!"

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The WRITE STUFF

Send your letters to **MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE**, % Marvel Comics Group,
387 Park Avenue South, New York, New York, 10016

Three cheers for *Greg Bowers*, of Fredericksburg, Virginia! If not for Greg, our letters page wouldn't have that snappy title you see lettered right up above. Remember — if you'd like to see a title of your own devising in that space — send your suggestions in! Picking out the lettercol title is half the fun!

And now, on with the letters . . .

Dear **MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE**,

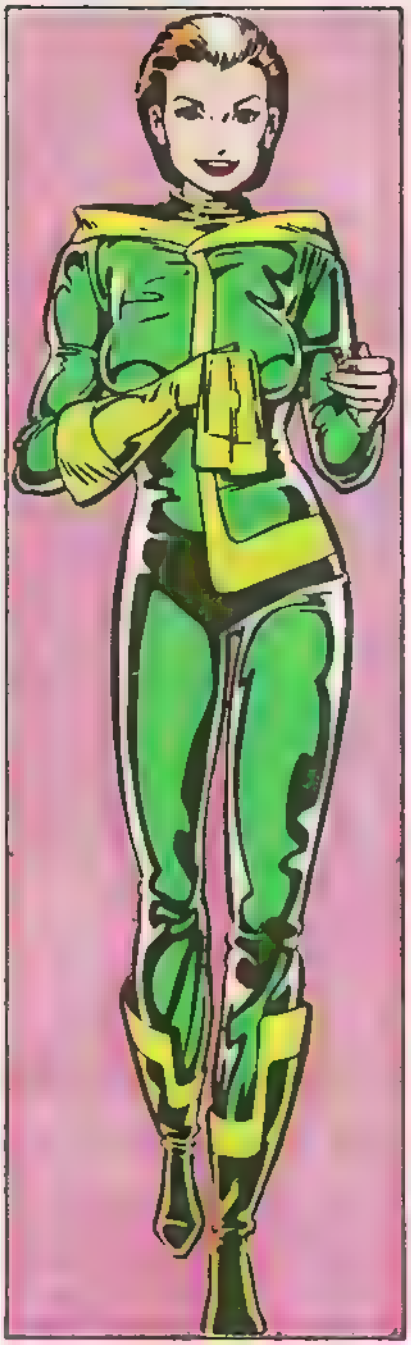
When I was younger (around 5 or so), I was sleeping, and while I was sleeping I had a dream, and in the dream I saw — would you believe this? — I saw half of page 5 of **MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE** #27! I saw clearly the name and write-up of **FRED HEMBECK DESTROYS THE MARVEL UNIVERSE** and the picture of Fred on the bottom with the explosives and the plunger. Plus, I saw everything else on that half of the page, but it was blurred. When I got **MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE** #27 on Saturday, February 23rd, I saw page 5 and it occured to me that I'd seen it before. Then on Sunday it hit me — I saw what I dreamt years ago! Kind of funny, huh?

Andrew Todd
35 Cook Rd.
Winnipeg, Manitoba
CANADA R3K 1G1

Kind of, but you've got to admit — it's got interesting possibilities! Like . . . well, the Bullpen is working on a whole bunch of new ideas for our 20th anniversary celebration next year, but we haven't figured out exactly what to do yet. Could you drop us a line and tell us which ideas we're actually going to do?

Dear **MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE**,

I just wanted to drop you a note to tell you how much I enjoy your new poster series. I have most of them and I love them all, especially the **SPIDER-MAN OLD AND NEW** poster by Frenz and Rubinstein. I hope you continue to come out with many more posters, and to that end I would like to suggest some characters that you should make posters of. I hope you'll take these suggestions into consideration. Here goes: **THE ASGARDIANS**, (by Walt Simonson), **AURORA**, **THE BLACK WIDOW**, **CAPTAIN AMERICA** (by Mike Zeck), **CAPTAIN MARVEL** (of the **Avengers**), **DAREDEVIL**, **ELEKTRA** (by Frank Miller), **GALACTUS**, **THE INHUMANS**, **MACHINE MAN**, **ROGUE** (by Paul Smith), **THE SHE-HULK** (by John Byrne), **THE STARJAMMERS** and **TIGRA**.



Kevin Hall
Route 1 Box 216
Castlewood, Virginia 24224

Dear **MARVEL AGE**rs,

Good news! I finally thought up the perfect name for **MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE**'s letters page! **Jim Salicrup**, the magazine's fearless editor, inspired me!

So you're
Always
Looking
Indecisively for a
Crazy
Radical
Uncommon letters
Page name!

I hope **Mr. Salicrup** is happy enough with this name (or egotistical enough) to use it one month!

Jamee Moore
#17-1390 W. 14th Avenue
Vancouver, B.C.
V6H-1R1 CANADA

Sorry, Jamee, but Jim said no. So I guess your suggestion is fated to remain forever in darkness. Nobody'll ever see it now.

Wait a minute . . . !

Dear Jim and company,

I have just started collecting **THE X-MEN** and **CAPTAIN AMERICA** (along with the other comics I collect), and I'd like to know if **Wolverine**'s claws can cut through **Captain America**'s shield?

Mike Moran
766 E. 19th St.
Brooklyn, NY 11230

Y'know, we get a lot of letters on this subject. We get so many letters asking about *Wolverine*'s claws and skeleton that we contemplated naming the letterco! "*Wolverine*'s *Bones*." But we came to our senses.

Anyway, here's the answer: No.

Wolverine's claws can't cut through *Captain America's* shield. *Wolvie's* claws are made of adamantium — which *Dr. Myron MacLain* invented while trying to duplicate the miraculous metal *Cap's* shield is made of — but he never could quite match the shield. Even if adamantium was as hard as *Cap's* shield, there's still the question of whether *Wolverine's* muscles can generate that much force. It's sort of like trying to cut through a steel table with a steel knife. It doesn't matter how tough the knife is — what matters is being strong enough to push it through solid steel. You can't do that to a table — and *Wolverine* can't do it to *Cap's* shield. All clear?

Dear Marvel,

Regarding **Johnny Romita**: I know the jazzy one does advertising, rookie-training, and special projects. I also hear he's slow and doesn't want a regular book. Suggestions: a) Pay him gobs of money. b) Let him do a *bi*-monthly title. c) How 'bout a Graphic Novel??

SOMETHING — PLEASE — HE'S THE GREATEST!

Noel Pratt
6365 Beryl Rd. #104
Alexandria, VA 22312

Everyone,

I want to pay a little tribute to a gentleman whom I think is one of the best inkers *ever* to work on a Marvel comic. He has inked fantastically over such greats as **Byrne**, **Romita Jr.**, **John Buscema** and **Kirby**, and yet he hardly ever gets any credit for consistently fantastic production. Any time you folks need someone to do a top-quality inking job on anything, get this man to do it. Along with **Terry Austin** and **Bob Layton**, he is my personal favorite.

Who am I talking about? Who else? **JOE SINNOTT!**

Todd Erickson
2106 Midlothian Rd.
Roseville, MN 55113

***Johnny, Joe* . . . stand up and take a bow, okay?**

Dear **MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE**,

I think you're not writing enough about mutants — like where they're from, what are their families like, etc. Many mutants are famous, so here's an idea: Why don't you do a series about the mutants of the world?

Here's another idea: If **Professor Xavier** was to have a party for the mutants of the world, that would tell more about them too.

Sean Dunbar
950 Underhill Avenue
New York, NY 10473

Well, Sean, you should be happy to see our new feature, "*The Mutant Report*," which debuted in *MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE* this issue! We'll try to keep you up to date on what's going on with all Marvel's mutants, in which books and with which creative teams, so you'll know where to look for all the info on your favorite mutants.

We've got to admit, though, your party idea sounds pretty neat. *Xavier could throw an International Mutant Blow-Out* in Westchester, complete with Hawaiian food and dancing (with *Dazzler* providing the music, of course). But *Xavier* wouldn't want to invite the *evil* mutants — and as gate-crashers, they can get pretty mean!

Dear **MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE**,

I'm writing in regards to a letter sent in to you by **Lori Anderson**. I'm behind her all the way. Too many heroes in the Marvel Universe are getting their hair chopped off. The last straw was **the Human Torch**, who now has a New Wave haircut. Mind you, I have nothing against New Wave, but I think there should be a few super heroes that listen to *HEAVY METAL*. If you let **the Torch** have a New Wave haircut, then let's see some long-haired heroes who listen to groups like **Mötley Crüe**. After all, fair is fair!!!

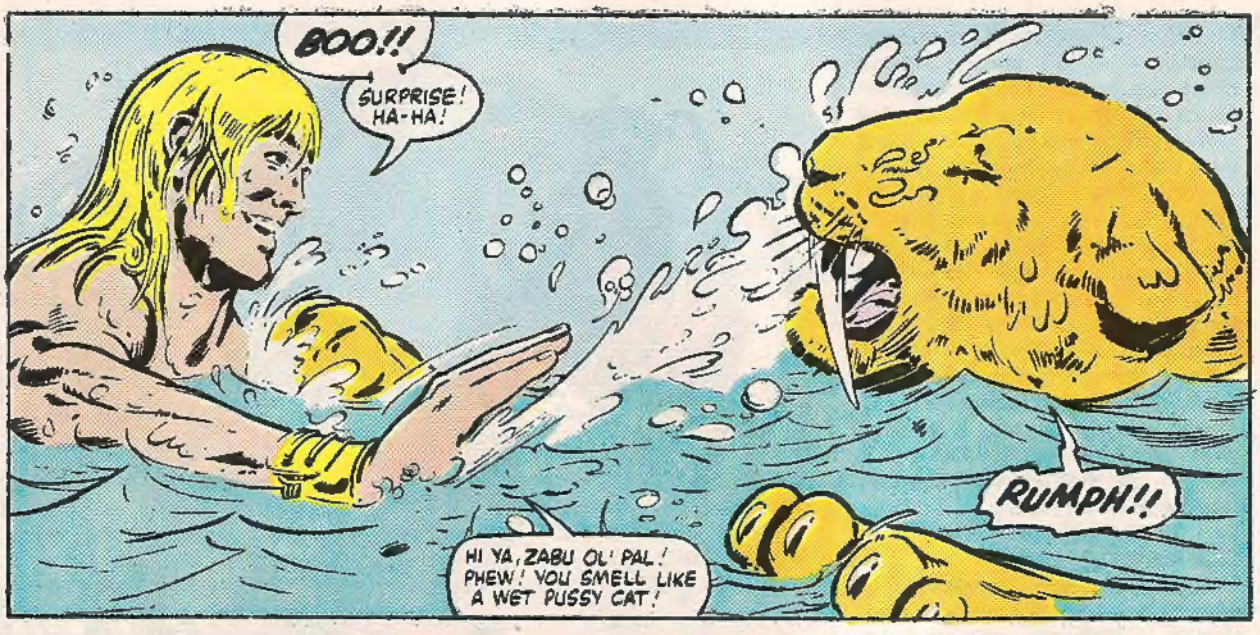
John Speaker
1746 Candelaro Ct.
Walnut Creek, CA 94598

Uh, well, there's always *Thor* . . . no, he probably listens to Gregorian chants or something. How about *D.W. Griffith*, in *POWER MAN AND IRON FIST*? No . . . he's a country-and-western fan. Well, then there's . . .

***The She-Hulk? Aquarian? Doc Samson? Ka-Zar? Shaman? Solarr? Thundra?* How about *Anger the Screamer?* He always struck us as a real "*Twisted Sister*" type.**

Dear Guys,

You'd better listen, because I was awake until three o'clock this morning deciding who I was going to put on this list. First of all, I want Limited Series starring **Nightcrawler**, **the Starjammers**, **Ka-Zar**, **the Daughters of the Dragon**, **Magneto** and **the Black Widow**. Then, I want **MARVEL FANFAREs** starring **the Starjammers**, **the White Queen**, **Storm** (before she got her mohawk), **Lockheed the Dragon**, **the Human Torch**, the new (and improved) **Captain Marvel**, **Rogue**, **Cateye** (you remember her, don't you?), **Cyclops** and (don't you dare



laugh) **Zabu**.

Besides all this, I want more portfolios in **FANFARE**. I want portfolios by **John Byrne**, **Terry Austin**, **Mark Bright**, **Steve Ditko** and **John Romita Jr.** I want portfolios done of one or two characters, by several different artists. Characters I'd like to see are: **the Black Widow**, **the Starjammers** (I really like those guys), **Red Sonja**, **the X-Men**, **Alpha Flight**, **the Black Cat**, **the Hellions** and **Jean Grey / Phoenix / Dark Phoenix**. You'd better do at least a couple of these things, because I'm tired, in a *real* bad mood, and I really don't feel like taking "No" for an answer. Understand?

Lynne Tucker
Las Vegas, Nevada

Uh, *Al? Al Milgrom?* We've got a letter for you. I mean, we've got a *NIGHTCRAWLER Limited Series* coming up — but most of this letter's in your court. It sounds like you'd better do something about it, too!

Dear **Jim** and **Company**,

Since you all (**Mark Gruenwald**, **Peter Sanderson** and other fellow Marvel magicians) did, and are doing, a fantastic job on **THE OFFICIAL HANDBOOK OF THE MARVEL UNIVERSE**, and the current **Deluxe Edition**, I find it only fair to inform you of another task, that could prove once again that nothing is mightier than Marvel! You could create **THE OFFICIAL QUIZ BOOK OF THE MARVEL UNIVERSE.**

I know you're groaning, but hear me out. This would definitely be a surefire seller. Friends and foes alike are constantly wondering where they stand as to their knowledge of the Marvel Universe. With categories on **the X-Men**, or on **Spider-Man**, any collector would pick it up!

Mark Wilhelm
136 First Rd. West
Hamilton, Ontario
CANADA L8G 3X4

Far from groaning, *Mark*, we're already thinking along similar lines. Even as you read this, there's a *Mighty Marvel Trivia Quiz* in the works for an upcoming issue of *MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE*. If readers respond well to it . . . who knows what the next step might be?

So be on the lookout, and sharpen your trivia skills! The quiz is coming!

Dear **Jim Salicrup**,

I just wanted to say that I loved "**The MARVEL AGE Calendar.**" Keep them coming!

Davis Tullock
115 Chadwick Rd.
Louisville, KY 40223

Not to worry, *Davis* — there's a calendar page on the back cover of this very magazine, and we have no intention of dropping them. *Jim* and *Ron Zalme* are just having too much fun with them to even think of it!

Dear Marvel sages,

The advent of **the Comic Buyer's Guide Poll** started my friends and I debating, first about questions on the poll, but then it broadened to cover all-time favorites!

Because of our major disagreements and minor agreements, we'd like to see a poll of all the Marvel fans. Question: "What was your favorite Marvel story *ever*?" Once you get the votes, you can print the top responses. Ten would do, though we'd rather see the top twenty.

Well? What do you think, guys? No, don't ask **Shooter**! We already know his answer — "Does anybody really have a . . . " Well, yes **Jim**, some of us do!

Edward Chaney
310 S. Augusta Ave.

Okay, the challenge has been made. Send your votes for the best Marvel story ever to us here at *MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE*. We'll tabulate the results and announce the winners. One addition we'll make to *Edward's* question: Once you've named your favorite story, add a few lines saying *why* you liked it so much.

And while you're thinking about your choices, we've got to go. The end of the page is creeping up on us, and there's next month's *MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE* to start work on. See you in one short month!

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Robert E. Howard's

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to the heart of darkest africa—
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if you are his prey,
do not sleep too soundly.

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THE MARVEL AGE 1985 CALENDAR

JUNE

JIM SALICRUP--WRITER
RON ZALME--ARTIST
ANDY YANCHUS--COLORIST

AY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
		COWABUNGA! YAY! WOO-HA	PUBLIC SCHOOL'S OUT!	1
WORD E IN... 4		6	7 THE BARONESS SPEAKS: HAPPY BIRTHDAY, LARRY HAMA! WINK	8 MIKE CARLIN SPEAKS: HAPPY BIRTHDAY, MIKE HIGGINS!
HOW EL'S F P.R.'s E P.R., NO.	12	13 FACE FRONT, PILGRIMS! TOMORROW IS...	14 ...FLAG DAY!	15 HAPPY BIRTHDAY, BRENT ANDERSON!
PY DAY, WALD! REME	19 DO THE NEW MUTANTS GET A SUMMER VACATION?	20	21 SUMMER BEGINS! SURF'S UP!	22 HAPPY BIRTHDAY, CANCER!
5	26 HAPPY BIRTHDAY, TOM DEFALCO!	27 HAPPY BIRTHDAY, JACKSON "BUTCH" GUICE!	28	29 TOMORROW IS PHIL LORD'S BIRTHDAY! BOOK 'EM, DANNO! THAT'S JACK LORD!

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